



**NEW YORK
UNIVERSITY
SKOPJE**

PR Strategy & Practice

Faculty of Communication and Media Studies

Postgraduate Program in Public Relations

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A large, abstract graphic composed of overlapping, semi-transparent blue and grey geometric shapes, resembling a stylized book or a series of pages. The word 'Reader' is centered on the right side of this graphic.

Reader

Introductory Note

This Reader has been compiled to provide practical resource for aspiring PR practitioners and managers. The core article is given in the *Course Overview* written specifically for this course. **Read this one carefully.** You can browse through the rest of the Reader or study it closely. Remember that your Final Exam is not theoretical, and at no point of time you will be expected to reproduce memorized content: *your final product is to deliver a PR Strategy and Implementation Plan for a campaign of your choice, and to present it for an examination committee.*

The Reader is intended to serve you long after the course is finished and the exam passed. Many of the articles are useful Do's and Don'ts - checklists to have at hand whenever a need arises. Included are materials for self study in the aftermath of the course for those who wish to enter the extraordinary realms of mental models (framing) and non/verbal communication. Management tools, such as PESTLE and SWOT analyses, Gantt charts and SMART/ER objectives, are useful in any walk of life. In addition, non-obligatory articles accompanying the reader (not in this document) aim to illustrate the far range of the PR profession in the contemporary world, such as Jihadi PR and US foreign policy PR.

This Reader does not include the required chapters from Theaker's PR Handbook (Theaker, Alison (ed.). 2004, *Public Relations Handbook*, 2nd edn, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, London & New York). The e-book, alongside additional files, case studies and illustrations, can be obtained by email from the course coordinator or on a CD from the Faculty staff.

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Ana Pejcinova

The curriculum of the Public Relations (PR) Strategy & Practice Course is designed for prospective PR practitioners who are likely to manage PR campaigns. Whether they work as independent consultants, publicity agents, media managers, marketers, NGO consultants or governmental officials, running a campaign includes all skills required for these professions. Other NYUS courses in Communication and Media complement this program. Effort has been taken to avoid overlap between courses. For example, *Web Design*, *New Media*, and *Media & Marketing* describe their respective areas in far more detail than given below. However, as PR practitioners must be familiar with many institutional functions, these border areas are touched upon to assure student's acquaintance with them.

The full scope of work of a PR practitioner is complex. However, the work in practice follows a simple logical sequence:

Groundwork

When you enter your new workplace as a PR person, your first task is to **get to know your organization**: your team is your main source of information for your PR campaign. Your *management* gives you specific guidelines, assigns your budget, and defines your scope of responsibilities. There is also the organization's vision and mission statement, which are to PR what a Constitution is to law. Your *support component* (finance, administration, contracts, procurement, logistics) will be essential for the implementation of your campaign (for example, how to purchase banners, how to outsource media production, how to utilize your budget, what laws regulate your practice, and how long everything takes).

The second step is to **get to know your organization's product(s)/service(s)**. This is simpler with businesses: the product or the service is clearly defined. Your job would be to acquaint yourself with the production or servicing process, and be able to translate it into layman words for various audiences. For NGOs, which usually perform a societal function, the product/service may be public awareness of a specific issue. For governmental agencies, the product may be a specific legal environment, or public service. In any case, you'd need to acquaint yourself with the *technical component* of your organization. Note that the technical component deals with implementation of the core organizational function (i.e., production of good, transport, commerce, awareness, education), while the support component deals with whatever is necessary to enable the technical component fulfill their part. Management supervises both.

The playing field

It's time to perform a **PESTLE** analysis, that is, to map out the **political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental** context in which your organization operates and in which your product/service is placed. The PESTLE analysis will give you a clear picture of the

playing field, the areas which constrain you and enable you to expand, areas where opportunities and threats lie, and issues you'd be able to avoid or use to empower your campaign and the work of your organisation.

The Game

The PESTLE analysis will already give you some indications about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for your organization and its product/service which you are hired to represent. It's time for a full **SWOT** analysis. Promote the strengths in your PR work and utilize the opportunities on time. Weaknesses can be managed or reframed into strengths (see part on framing in the Reader). For example, 'our company is small' can be reframed into 'our company is flexible and can adjust easily to technological progress.' 'We have no budget for promotion and publicity' can be reframed into 'We are using community support, social media and word of mouth, as a socially responsible and green company.' Notice how the quadrants are interconnected and utilize their connectedness. Remember that *the point of the four SWOT quadrants is in their relationship*. Redo a SWOT regularly to keep abreast of any challenges coming your way. PESTLE and SWOT will give you basic ideas how to build your messaging, how to segment your audience, and how to implement the campaign.

The Players

Now that you 'know your stuff' even better, it's time to start the actual PR preparations. Map out the field: **Clients**: who is your primary client? It can be your donor, or it can be a buyer or service user (end user), or it can be a beneficiary of the societal function your organization fulfills. **Stakeholders**: Who has a stake in what you offer in the market or in the community? Who is affected positively and who negatively by your organisation's core function? **Partners** and **competitors**: Who also plays the field, apart from the organization? Does their presence endanger your organization or supports it? **Beneficiaries**: Who benefits, directly or indirectly, from your organisation's product/service? Note that beneficiaries represent a wider audience than end-users.

How are these groups related? What is their source of funding? What are their vested interests? What are the communication flows between them, and where can you insert your PR products? This will enable you to foresee resistance/support to your presence and promotional efforts, build coalitions, and access additional support and funding.

Audience segmentation and profiling

Your message will be molded by your listeners. If you've got a problem in your personal life, for example, you'll describe it differently to your grandmother, your best friend, and your boss, right? The same works in PR. It's time to define the many audiences of your PR work. Divide them by type, size and importance. It's good to do a **demographic profiling** of the large audiences and break it down further into segments. For example, if you are working on a USAID-funded program on voter education, your primary audience might be USAID and the

secondary the voters. The voter group can be segmented into subgroups: young people age 16-17 who will be eligible to vote by the time you complete your project; eligible rural inhabitants who rarely vote; women; disabled; minority groups. Each of these sub-audiences has different reason not to vote and different potential vested interest in the results of the elections. Your PR work will have to address each sub-audience. The same works for marketing PR: different sub-audiences might find different reasons to buy your product/service. Note that *there is no such thing as general public* in PR work or in marketing: it's a set of overlapping groups of interests and behaviors, where each group is made of individuals. *Decision makers are individuals*, even when your audience is a company or a governmental agency. Remember that your work should ultimately affect how individuals (and therefore groups) make their decisions.

Messaging and messages

Firstly, define your audiences and then describe their **current behavior** in one sentence per audience. Focus on the undesirable behavior for the time being. For example, 'elderly women do not buy computers.' Or, our primary audience, 'voters are indifferent to our new political party.' Secondly, describe their **desired behavior**: 'each elderly woman buys a computer,' and 'voters actively support our political party (membership and votes increase). You've got your future strategic frame: now the question is how to *achieve change from current to desired behavior*.

What do you want to tell each sub-audience: "Grandmas, buy computers"? Or, "Citizens, love us"? That would be your **messaging frame**. You will rarely find your messaging and your message identical. Your **message** will be derived from your messaging frame: for example, "Connect to your child [online]" is a message. In the other example, a message might be, "We are your family."

Strategy and tactics

Your **Strategic PR/Communications Plan** will contain PESTLE, SWOT, audience segmentation, behavior description, the messaging frame, and your idea(s) how to achieve change from current to desired behavior. Your **Implementation Plan** will translate these ideas into practices and deliverables (products) that will achieve that change.

We know the direction we want to go, we have basic overview of the landscape and the inhabitants, but where exactly do we want to get? How far is enough? How will we know when we get there?

Goals and objectives

It's easy to say, 'Our goal is to build a civic society and true democracy.' This is not a **SMART** goal. It might be a *vision* of an organization. A goal, on the other hand, must be **s**pecific, **m**easurable, **a**ctionable, **r**ealistic and **t**imed. Thus, your goal may be actually 'to increase voter participation at the municipal, parliamentary and presidential elections by 35% in general within

four years by means of a targeted strategic campaign.’ This statement is specific as opposed to the abstract definition of ‘true democracy.’ It’s action-oriented: it speaks of voter behavior, and not of beliefs and values. It’s realistic: it doesn’t claim 100% voter turnout which is a symptom of only totalitarian systems. It’s timed: within four years. It’s even SMART/ER: it can be evaluated, or measured by objective methods (vote counting), and it’s resourced – it has defined resources (campaign) to utilize.

Production media

Now that you know what you want to say and to whom, it’s time to define how you are going to say it. Which **medium** is the best to communicate your messages to your audiences? Your demographic analysis should include preferred media. For example, it’s not useful to plan Internet campaign if your major audience is rural population without access to the Internet. A quick survey of media preferences among your target audience should inform your strategy and implementation plan on the media channels you will focus on.

Note that the types of media outlets you’ll use will define your budget requirements. Keeping an eye on your budget will enable you to plan within it. The budget, your time and the human resources are your most valuable and constraining factors.

Gantt chart

Your Implementation Plan will contain a Gantt chart. This simple tool is essential for successfully managing your work, regardless to what your work is. A simple Gantt chart is a calendar listing the tasks you need to accomplish in order to achieve your goal in a specific timeframe. The chart will enable you to plan in advance and get the work done on time. Without timed planning, there will be dozens of ‘unforeseen’ minor and major issues to delay or sabotage your performance. More **complex Gantt charts** will include detailed breakdown of tasks, benchmarks you need to achieve on the way to achieving your goals, other people’s tasks which enable your work, dependencies between tasks, financial items and external resources. For the time being, a simple Gantt chart would suffice.

Production process and deliverables

Finally, it’s time to produce the actual products that would be vehicles of change from current to desired behavior. These can be new sletters, articles, TV/radio ads, T-shirts, banners, forums, meetings, public events – the list is long. Typically, PR practitioners are in charge of **in-house production** and/or of **outsourcing** more complex deliverables, such as TV ads, for instance. Even if you work for a large company with immense budget, and you decide to outsource everything, you will still have to know the production process in detail in order to be able to *define the product* you want for the contractor, and to supervise/advise their work. Outsourcing is not just about hiring someone else to do our work: it’s doing the work with an external team.

If you are the single PR person in your organization, and you have no budget to outsource, you'll have to do the work all by yourself. Consider getting additional skills in graphic design (Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, preferably) and web design (at least FrontPage or Dreamweaver). Free tutorials are available on the web. I assume you have already developed good writing skills, right? We'll work on it too.

The typical products PR professionals develop are: PR messages, organizational briefs of various length, presentations using PowerPoint, speeches, press releases, news stories, and media kits. Web content is quite likely to fall in your charge as well. You may find it useful to build an online profile for your organization in the social networks, such as Facebook, or maintain a blog. Each medium will require the same content to be shaped differently.

Media management

The media is usually your counterpart in your work. It can be friendly, not so friendly, or simply indifferent. Much depends on how you handle it. To build a sound relationship with the media, you'd need to think as a journalist. Map the media outlets and start building your database of contacts. Don't take it personally if your press release does not make the news at once – link your media messages to what is a 'burning issue' for the media and the public, and your chances of getting publicity will increase. For example, if your company is opening a new transport center in the suburbs, it's not newsworthy if you report it as such. However, if your **press release** is titled 'Over hundred jobs created in poor community' or 'Macedonian business expands in time of global recession,' the journalists are likely to read your news release and perhaps even come to the opening ceremony. You are going to organize a special event for the opening ceremony, inviting dignitaries, opinion formers, local population, and the media, right? You *are* the PR person, it's *your* job! Note that the Reader contains a self-explanatory sample Gantt chart for **event management**.

Your SWOT and PESTLE should warn you, however, that your brand new transport center might be perceived as an ecological polluter. The media might forego the employment benefits and focus on pollution. In this case, make sure to include assurances of ecological care and legal compliance in the press release.

Crisis management

Which brings us to the question: what if the media *does* go after the negative aspects of your organisation's work? Crisis! When crisis happens, and it happens often, you will be your organisation's face that takes the public slaps. That's why you did your PESTLE and SWOT analyses on time, and you pre-empted most foreseeable crises. You've got a press release ready. 'No comment' is not one of your options. You do not leave your telephone ringing when everyone seems to try to contact you, after months of you chasing after them to get their attention. Now it's time to prove your worth. A good PR person can turn crisis into positive publicity: be available, be honest, take responsibility, show human concern, and reframe: focus on the positive aspects of the negative situation. In the worst case, to reframe misfortune as a

learning opportunity and motive for change will carry you through a crisis. Show your organization as a learning organism with a human face capable of change and response.

Presentation skills

You are the face of your organization 'for better or for worse, in sickness and in health,' until your contract expires. Much of your work is dealing with people. You're trying to make friends everywhere you go as a part of your job description. How to make friends? How to handle indifferent or hostile audience? How to raise funds, gain community support or make a governmental agency hear you out? How to make them trust you, and even like you and agree with you? The bottom line is, 'how to make them do what you want without use of force'? By your ability to think big and see values in individual actions. By your ability to communicate your vision persuasively. Verbal and non-verbal communication is a core skill for PR practitioners. For master practitioners, we need to dive in an unlikely sphere: the human unconscious. How do people form meaning out of information? What draws their attention? What remains in their memory? Why do people like some and dislike others, often on first sight?

Verbal and non-verbal communication

For instance, the unconscious doesn't recognize the meaning of negativity: it skips over a 'no' in a sentence without recording it. Don't think of a green elephant! What image just passed through your mind? Avoid using 'no.' Instead, use positive sentences. For example, a journalist asks you, 'Is it true that you paid demonstrators to rally in front of the government building yesterday?' If you say 'No, we didn't,' the headlines the next day will read 'We didn't pay demonstrators, states X'. What will the readers remember after a few days? A positive connection between your organization and bribing people to do your stuff. Your reputation is ruined and you've failed. Instead, say something like, 'our *mission* [X] is an expression of *deep* public sentiments and *real* citizens' concerns about [Y]. This *was proved* by the presence of more than [Z] demonstrators demanding *governmental change of policies*.'" If the interview is audio, **drop your voice** at the words you want the audience's unconscious to memorize (example in italic above.)

Be specific. More or less, something, someone, somehow, or some time, neither build trust nor the unconscious records them. Clear images do the job. Say who will do what, when, how, and with whom, to address which issue. More skills will be exercised in the course. See also the chapters on mirroring and rapport building in the Reader.

Evaluation

You've done your job, the campaign is on the air, you've had your good moments with the public and the media. How do you know you've actually done well or poorly? Survey it. Learn from mistakes and think of ways to do it better next time. Tell your management what you've learnt and you want them, or you, to change to perform even better next time. Take a deep breath and start planning your new campaign. Good luck!

PART I: WHAT IS PR?

Note to Wikipedia entries: All entries have been cleared as reliable and accurate.

Mandatory Reading: Theaker, Chapter 1: *What is Public Relations?*; Chapter 14: *Public Sector Public Relations*

Public relations

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Public relations (PR) is the practice of managing the flow of information between an [organization](#) and its [publics](#).^[1] Public relations gains an organization or individual [exposure](#) to their [audiences](#) using [topics](#) of [public](#) interest and [news](#) items that do not require direct [payment](#).^[2] Because public relations places exposure in credible third-party outlets, it offers a third-party [legitimacy](#) that [advertising](#) does not have.^[2] Common activities include speaking at conferences, working with the press, and employee communication.

PR can be used to build rapport with [employees](#), [customers](#), [investors](#), [voters](#), or the general public.^[2] Almost any organization that has a stake in how it is portrayed in the public arena employs some level of public relations. A number of specialties exist within the field of public relations, such as Analyst Relations, [Media Relations](#), [Investor Relations](#) or [Labor Relations](#).

Definition

See more at [History of public relations](#)

The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) claimed: "Public relations helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other."^[3] According to the PRSA, the essential functions of public relations include research, planning, communications dialogue and evaluation.^[4]

[Edward Louis Bernays](#), who is considered the founding father of modern public relations along with [Ivy Lee](#), in the early 1900s defined public relations as a management function which tabulates public attitudes, defines the policies, procedures and interests of an organization. . . followed by executing a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance" (see [history of public relations](#)).

Today, "Public Relations is a set of management, supervisory, and technical functions that foster an organization's ability to strategically listen to, appreciate, and respond to those persons whose mutually beneficial relationships with the organization are necessary if it is to

achieve its missions and values."^[6] Essentially it is a management function that focuses on two-way communication and fostering of mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics.

Building and managing relationships with those who influence an organization or individual's audiences has a central role in public relations.^[6]

The industry today

Advertising dollars in media products from corporations like News Corp., Dow Jones, and CMP are under rapid decline in favor of direct advertising products offered by search engines and other tools. 11 Traditional media publications are laying off journalists, consolidating beat reporters, shrinking their print _ions, and many publications are shutting down entirely.^[7]

[Blogs](#) have lower over-head costs than traditional media and are often said to provide better news coverage and analysis.^[8] Blogs are increasingly sprouting to replace traditional media with a more sustainable low-cost business model and are gaining more of a following.

The advent of social media is the most pre-eminent trend in PR today.^[9] It's important to note, while social media is on the rise, traditional media is yet to be taken over by the trend as of January 29, 2009.^[10]

Social media releases, search engine optimization, content publishing, and the introduction of podcasts and video are other burgeoning trends.^[9]

Legality

In many countries, the law recognizes the value of reputation and credibility. Both [libel](#) (a false and damaging publication) and slander (a false and damaging oral statement) are often punishable by law and may result in imprisonment or compensation or fees for damages done.

Public Relations Basics

From: American Legion Auxiliary, 2005, *Public Relations Handbook*, American Legion Auxiliary, Indianapolis, IN.

What is Public Relations?

IMAGE. Every member is a part of the image we project. People's perceptions can be made quickly from both the positives and negatives, seen and heard.

Effective public relations efforts increase community visibility and enhance the ability to attract new members. Maintaining a good image requires a continuous public relations effort.

Public Relations (PR) requires that you relate to the public in some manner. The question is, "What is a 'public' and how do we relate to it?" Several 'publics' require our attention as PR volunteers. These include, but are not limited to:

- Our members (Internal)
- The media (External)
- Local and national elected officials and decision-makers (External)
- Local community members (External & potential members)
- Citizens in general (External & potential members)

Every Auxiliary member is involved in public relations by spreading the good word about her Unit, District, or Department. The PR Chairman has the responsibility of planning, organizing and executing a public relations program. An organization's image is based on the character, integrity and total performance of the organization. It is a composite of:

- The organization's history in dealing with people
- Internal attitude toward members
- External attitude toward community responsibility and involvement
- News releases and other dealings with the media
- Internal and external publications
- Institutional advertising

The Unit, District or Department PR Chairman, will be responsible for the following primary tasks or delegation of them:

Internal Communication

Communicate Unit's activities with members via: newsletters, flyers, and/or other means of local and national policy and programs. Don't assume members understand what your organization is all about. Keeping members informed is critical to keeping them motivated and active.

External Communication

Inviting members of your community to attend a ceremony or function in your organization. This may involve coordination with one or more media outlets in your community and doing whatever is needed to reach those people.

Community Relations

As good citizens of the community, your company members should ask to be represented at various civic functions or meetings. While the Unit President will most often be the point of contact for civic and community functions, the PR Chairman should be the one to advise the President on specific issues and will act as spokesperson on occasion.

Media Relations

Why won't your local newspaper run your story about the bake sale you're having this weekend? What is that TV reporter doing outside your Unit with the photographer interviewing your members? How did that story get printed without the PR Chairman (or the Unit President) knowing anything about it?

Effective media relations means that you and the various area media have a good working relationship. It's a mutual relationship based on trust and honesty. They call you when they need answers on veterans' issues, and you know who to call to provide a local angle to a national story regarding the American Legion Auxiliary.

Good public relations begins with the Unit President and PR Chairman establishing policies and practices that are ethical, honest and in keeping with the public interest.

Meet and Greet

Many businesses and organizations will use a Meet and Greet as a method of introducing two or more parties to each other in a comfortable setting. These will generally involve some sort of incentive, usually food catered from restaurants, to encourage employees or members to participate.

There are opposing schools of thought as to how the specific mechanics of a Meet and Greet operate. The [Gardiner](#) school of thought states that unless specified as an informal event, all parties should arrive promptly at the time at which the event is scheduled to start.

The [Kolanowski](#) school of thought, however, states that parties may arrive at any time after the event begins, in order to provide a more relaxed interaction environment.

Managing language

If a politician or organization can use an apt phrase in relation to an issue, such as in interviews or news releases, the news media will often repeat it verbatim, without questioning the aptness of the phrase. This perpetuates both the message and whatever preconceptions might underlie it. Often, something innocuous sounding can stand in for something greater; a "[culture of life](#)" sounds like general goodwill to most people, but will evoke opposition to abortion for many pro-life advocates. The phrase "[States' rights](#)" was used as a code for anti-[civil rights](#) legislation in the United States in the 1960s, and, allegedly, the 70s, and 80s.

Conveying the message

The method of communication can be as important as a message. [Direct mail](#), [robocalling](#), [advertising](#) and [public speaking](#) are used depending upon the intended audience and the message that is conveyed. Press releases are also used, but since many newspapers are folding, they have become a less reliable way of communicating, and other methods have become more popular.

Arts organizations have begun to rely more on their own websites and have developed a variety of unique approaches to publicity and public relations, on and off the web. ^[12]

The country of [Israel](#) has recently employed a series of [Web 2.0](#) initiatives, including a [blog](#),^[13] [MySpace](#) page,^[14] [YouTube](#) channel,^[15] [Facebook](#) page^[16] and a [political blog](#) to reach different audiences.^[17] The [Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) started the country's [video blog](#) as well as its political blog.^[17] The Foreign Ministry held the first [microblogging press conference](#) via [Twitter](#) about its [war with Hamas](#), with [Consul David Saranga](#) answering live questions from a worldwide public in common text-messaging abbreviations.^[18] The questions and answers were later posted on [IsraelPolitik](#), the country's official [political blog](#).^[19]

Other

- Publicity events, [pseudo-events](#), [photo ops](#) or [publicity stunts](#)
- The [talk show](#) circuit. A PR spokesperson (or his/her client) "does the circuit" by being interviewed on television and radio talk shows with audiences that the client wishes to reach.
- Books and other writings
- [Blogs](#)
- After a PR practitioner has been working in the field for a while, he or she accumulates a list of contacts in the media and elsewhere in the public affairs sphere. This "[Rolodex](#)" becomes

a prized asset, and job announcements sometimes even ask for candidates with an existing Rolodex, especially those in the media relations area of PR.

- Direct communication (carrying messages directly to constituents, rather than through the mass media) with, e.g., newsletters – in print and e-letters.
- [Collateral](#) literature, traditionally in print and now predominantly as web sites.
- Speeches to constituent groups and professional organizations; receptions; seminars, and other events; personal appearances.
- The slang term for a PR practitioner or publicist is a "flack" (sometimes spelled "flak").
- A Desk Visit is where the PR person literally takes their product to the desk of the journalist in order to show them what they are promoting.
- [Astroturfing](#) is the act of PR agencies placing blog and online forum messages for their clients, in the guise of a normal "grassroots" user or comment.
- Online Social Media

Wiki: Methods, tools and tactics

Public relations and [publicity](#) are not synonymous but many PR campaigns include provisions for publicity. Publicity is the spreading of information to gain public awareness for a product, person, service, cause or organization, and can be seen as a result of effective PR planning.

Publics targeting

A fundamental technique used in public relations is to identify the target audience, and to tailor every message to appeal to that audience. It can be a general, nationwide or worldwide audience, but it is more often a segment of a population. Marketers often refer to economy-driven "[demographics](#)," such as "black males 18-49," but in public relations an audience is more fluid, being whoever someone wants to reach. For example, recent political audiences include "[soccer moms](#)" and "[NASCAR dads](#)." There is also a psychographic grouping based on fitness level, eating preferences, "adrenaline junkies," etc...

In addition to audiences, there are usually [stakeholders](#), literally people who have a "stake" in a given issue. All audiences are stakeholders (or presumptive stakeholders), but not all stakeholders are audiences. For example, a charity commissions a PR agency to create an advertising campaign to raise money to find a cure for a disease. The charity and the people with the disease are stakeholders, but the audience is anyone who is likely to donate money.

Sometimes the interests of differing audiences and stakeholders common to a PR effort necessitate the creation of several distinct but still complementary messages. This is not always easy to do, and sometimes – especially in politics – a spokesperson or client says something to one audience that angers another audience or group of stakeholders.

Lobby groups

[Lobby groups](#) are established to influence government policy, corporate policy, or public opinion. An example of this is the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, [AIPAC](#), which influences American foreign policy. Such groups claim to represent a particular interest and in fact are dedicated to doing so. When a lobby group hides its true purpose and support base it is known as a [front group](#). Moreover, governments may also lobby public relations firms in order to sway public opinion. A well illustrated example of this is the way civil war in Yugoslavia was portrayed. Governments of newly succeeded republics of Croatia and Bosnia invested heavily with American PR firms, so that the PR firms would give them a positive war image in the US. ^[11]

Spin

In public relations, "spin" is sometimes a [pejorative](#) term signifying a heavily biased portrayal in one's own favour of an event or situation. While traditional public relations may also rely on creative presentation of the facts, "[spin](#)" often, though not always, implies disingenuous,

deceptive and/or highly manipulative tactics. Politicians are often accused of spin by commentators and political opponents, when they produce a counter argument or position.

The techniques of "spin"s include selectively presenting facts and quotes that support one's position ([cherry picking](#)), the so-called "[non-denial denial](#)," phrasing in a way that assumes unproven truths, [euphemisms](#) for drawing attention away from items considered distasteful, and ambiguity in public statements. Another spin technique involves careful choice of timing in the release of certain news so it can take advantage of prominent events in the news. A famous reference to this practice occurred when British Government press officer [Jo Moore](#) used the phrase *It's now a very good day to get out anything we want to bury*, (widely [paraphrased](#) or [misquoted](#) as "It's a good day to bury bad news"), in an email sent on [September 11, 2001](#). The furor caused when this email was reported in the press eventually caused her to resign.

Spin doctor

Skilled practitioners of spin are sometimes called "spin doctors," though probably not to their faces unless it is said facetiously. It is the PR equivalent of calling a writer a "[hack](#)." Perhaps the most well-known person in the UK often described as a "spin doctor" is [Alastair Campbell](#), who was involved with [Tony Blair](#)'s public relations between 1994 and 2003, and also played a controversial role as press relations officer to the [British and Irish Lions rugby union](#) side during their [2005 tour of New Zealand](#).

State-run [media](#) in many countries also engage in spin by selectively allowing news stories that are favorable to the government while censoring anything that could be considered critical. They may also use [propaganda](#) to [indoctrinate](#) or actively influence citizens' opinions. Privately run media also uses the same techniques of 'issue' versus 'non-issue' to spin its particular political viewpoints.

Black Public Relations (BPR) or negative PR is a process of destroying someone's reputation and [corporate identity](#). In other words, instead of concentrating efforts in the maintenance and the creation of a positive reputation/ image of your clients, you are trying to discredit someone else (usually your business rivals). Unlike the regular services in Public Relations, those in BPR rely on the development of industries such as [IT security](#), [industrial espionage](#), [social engineering](#) and [competitive intelligence](#). Their main objective is finding all of the dirty secrets of their target and turning them against their very own holder.

The building of a Black PR campaign, also known as a [dirty tricks](#) or a [smear campaign](#) is a long and a complex operation. Traditionally it starts with an extensive [information gathering](#) and follows the other needs of a precise competitive research. The gathered information is being used after that as a part of a greater strategical planning, aiming to destroy the relationship between the company and its stakeholders.

A **smear campaign**, **smear tactic** or simply **smear** is a [metaphor](#) for activity that can harm an individual or group's reputation by [conflation](#) with a [stigmatized](#) group. Sometimes **smear** is used more generally to include any reputation-damaging activity, including such colloquialisms as **mud slinging**.

Common targets are public officials, [politicians](#), and political candidates. Smear campaigns are often based on information gleaned from [opposition research](#) conducted by paid political consultants. To a lesser degree, the term can refer to an attempt to damage a private person's reputation; for example, during a [trial](#), the opposing counsel may attempt to cast doubt on the reliability of a [witness](#).

The concept of the smear campaign is related to the concepts of [propaganda](#), [media bias](#), [yellow journalism](#), and other [falsehood](#)-related terms such as [libel](#) and [pejoration](#). In extreme cases, smear campaigns may lead to widespread [persecution](#), such as in the case of the [Dolchstoßlegende](#) before [WWII](#).

A smear campaign is an intentional, premeditated effort to undermine an individual's or group's reputation, credibility, and character. "Mud slinging", like [negative campaigning](#), most often targets government officials, politicians, political candidates, and other public figures. However, private persons or groups may also become targets of smear campaigns perpetrated in schools, companies, institutions, families, and other social groups.

Smear tactics differ from normal discourse or debate in that they do not bear upon the issues or arguments in question. A smear is a simple attempt to malign a group or an individual and to attempt to undermine their credibility.

Smears often consist of [ad hominem](#) attacks in the form of unverifiable rumors and are often distortions, half-truths, or even outright lies; smear campaigns are often propagated by [gossip](#) spreading. Even when the facts behind a smear are shown to lack proper foundation, the tactic is often effective because the target's reputation is tarnished before the truth is known.

Smears are also effective in diverting attention away from the matter in question and onto the individual or group. The target of the smear is typically forced to defend his reputation rather than focus on the previous issue.

Smear tactics are considered by many to be a low, disingenuous form of discourse; they are nevertheless very common.

Front groups

One of the most controversial practices in public relations is the use of [front groups](#) – organizations that purport to serve a public cause while actually serving the interests of a client whose sponsorship may be obscured or concealed. Critics of the public relations industry, such as [PR Watch](#), have contended that Public Relations involves a "multi-billion dollar propaganda-

for-hire industry" that "concoct[s] and spin[s] the news, organize[s] phoney 'grassroots' front groups, sp[ies] on citizens, and conspire[s] with lobbyists and politicians to thwart democracy." [1].

Instances of the use of front groups as a PR technique have been documented in many industries. Coal mining corporations have created environmental groups that contend that increased CO2 emissions and [global warming](#) will contribute to plant growth and will be beneficial, trade groups for bars have created and funded citizens' groups to attack anti-alcohol groups, tobacco companies have created and funded citizens' groups to advocate for [tort reform](#) and to attack personal injury lawyers, while trial lawyers have created "consumer advocacy" front groups to oppose tort reform.[2][3][4].

History of public relations

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **history of public relations** is mostly confined to the early half of the twentieth century; however there is evidence of the practices scattered through history. One notable practitioner was [Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire](#) whose efforts on behalf of [Charles James Fox](#) in the 18th century included press relations, lobbying and, with her friends, celebrity campaigning ^[1].

A number of American precursors to public relations are found in the form of publicists who specialized in promoting circuses, theatrical performances, and other public spectacles. In the United States, where public relations has its origins, many early public relations practices were developed in support of railroads. In fact, many scholars believe that the first appearance of the term "public relations" appeared in the *1897 Year Book of Railway Literature* ^[2].

Later, practitioners were — and are still often — recruited from the ranks of journalism. Some reporters concerned with ethics criticize former colleagues for using their inside understanding of news media to help clients receive favorable media coverage.

[]The first "names"

Some historians regard Ivy Lee as the first real practitioner of public relations, but Edward Bernays, a nephew and student of [Sigmund Freud](#), is generally regarded today as the profession's founder. In the United Kingdom Sir [Basil Clarke](#) (1879 - 1947) was a pioneer of public relations.

The [First World War](#) helped stimulate the development of public relations as a profession. Many of the first PR professionals, including [Ivy Lee](#), [Edward Bernays](#), [John W. Hill](#), and [Carl Byoir](#), got their start with the [Committee on Public Information](#) (also known as the Creel Committee), which organized publicity on behalf of U.S. objectives during World War I.

Edward Bernays was the self-appointed Father of Public Relations.

In describing the origin of the term Public Relations, Bernays commented, "When I came back to the United States [from the war], I decided that if you could use [propaganda](#) for war, you could certainly use it for peace. And propaganda got to be a bad word because of the Germans ... using it. So what I did was to try to find some other words, so we found the words Counsel on Public Relations".

Ivy Lee, who has been credited with developing the modern [news release](#) (also called a "press release"), espoused a philosophy consistent with what has sometimes been called the "two-way street" approach to public relations in which PR consists of helping clients listen as well as communicate messages to their publics. In the words of the [Public Relations Society of](#)

America (PRSA), "Public relations helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other." In practice, however, Lee often engaged in one-way [propagandizing](#) on behalf of clients despised by the public, including Standard Oil founder [John D. Rockefeller](#). Shortly before his death, the [US Congress](#) had been investigating Rockefeller's work on behalf of the controversial [Nazi German](#) company [IG Farben](#).

Bernays was the profession's first theorist. Bernays drew many of his ideas from Sigmund Freud's theories about the irrational, unconscious motives that shape human behaviour. Bernays authored several books, including *Crystallizing Public Opinion* (1923), *Propaganda* (1928), and *The Engineering of Consent* (1947). He saw public relations as an "applied social science" that uses insights from psychology, sociology, and other disciplines to scientifically manage and manipulate the thinking and behavior of an irrational and "herdlike" public. "The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society," he wrote in *Propaganda*, "Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country."

In the 1890s when gender role reversals could be caricatured, the idea of an aggressive woman who also smoked was considered laughable. In 1929, Edward Bernays proved otherwise when he convinced women to smoke in public during an Easter parade in Manhattan as a show of defiance against male domination. The demonstrators were not aware that a tobacco company was behind the publicity stunt.

One of Bernays' early clients was the [tobacco industry](#). In 1929, he orchestrated a now-legendary [publicity stunt](#) aimed at persuading women to take up [cigarette smoking](#), an act that at the time was exclusively equated with men. It was considered unfeminine and inappropriate for women to smoke; besides the occasional [prostitute](#), virtually no women participated in the act publicly. (Indeed, in some countries this is very much still the case.^{[[citation needed](#)]})

Bernays initially consulted psychoanalyst A. A. Brill for advice, Brill told him: "Some women regard cigarettes as symbols of freedom... Smoking is a sublimation of oral eroticism; holding a cigarette in the mouth excites the oral zone. It is perfectly normal for women to want to smoke cigarettes. Further the first women who smoked probably had an excess of male components and adopted the habit as a masculine act. But today the emancipation of women has suppressed many feminine desires. More women now do the same work as men do.... Cigarettes, which are equated with men, become torches of freedom."^{[[citation needed](#)]}

Upon hearing this analysis, Bernays dubbed his PR campaign the: "Torches of Liberty Contingent".

It was in this spirit that Bernays arranged for [New York City](#) débutantes to march in that year's Easter Day Parade, defiantly smoking cigarettes as a statement of rebellion against the norms of a male-dominated society. Publicity photos of these beautiful fashion models smoking "Torches of Liberty" were sent to various media outlets and appeared worldwide. As a result,

the taboo was dissolved and many women were led to associate the act of smoking with female liberation. Some women went so far as to demand membership in all-male [smoking clubs](#), a highly controversial act at the time. For his work, Bernays was paid a tidy sum by George Washington Hill, president of the [American Tobacco Company](#).

Though not a commercial success in Europe, [Paul Chabas's](#) *September Morn* ended up in the permanent collection of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art after scandalising [Anthony Comstock](#).

Another early practitioner was [Harry Reichenbach](#) (1882-1931) a New York-based American press agent and publicist who promoted movies. He claims to have made famous the [Paul Chabas](#) painting, *September Morn*. Supposedly, he saw a print in a Chicago art store window. He made a deal with the store owner who had not sold any of his 2,000 prints. Reichenbach had hired some boys to "ogle" the picture when he showed it to the moralist crusader [Anthony Comstock](#). Comstock was suitably outraged when he saw it. Comstock's Anti-Vice Society took the case to the court and lost. However, the case aroused interest to the painting, which ultimately sold millions of copies.

[_]Standards

In 1950 PRSA enacts the first "Professional Standards for the Practice of Public Relations," a forerunner to the current Code of Ethics, last revised in 2000 to include six core values and six code provisions. The six core values are "Advocacy, Honesty, Expertise, Independence, Loyalty, and Fairness." The six code provisions consulted with are "Free Flow of Information, Competition, Disclosure of Information, Safeguarding Confidences, Conflicts of Interest, and Enhancing the Profession."

In 1982 effective Public Relations helped save the Johnson & Johnson Corporation, after the highly publicized [Tylenol](#) poisoning crisis.

PR-RELATED PROFESSIONS

Communications management

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Communications management is the systematic [planning](#), implementing, monitoring, and revision of all the channels of [communication](#) within an [organization](#), and between organizations; it also includes the [organization](#) and dissemination of new communication directives connected with an organization, [network](#), or [communications technology](#). Aspects of communications management include developing corporate communication [strategies](#), designing internal and external communications directives, and managing the [flow of information](#), including [online](#) communication. New technology forces constant innovation on the part of communications managers.

[_]The weekly reporting method

One simple and popular communications method is called the weekly reporting method: every employee composes an [e-mail](#) report, once a week, including information on their activities in the preceding week, their plans for the following week, and any other information deemed relevant to the larger group, bearing in mind length considerations. Reports are sent to managers, who summarize and report to their own managers, eventually leading to an overall summary led by the [CEO](#), which is then sent to the [board of directors](#). The CEO then sends the board's summary back down the ladder, where each manager can append an additional summary or note before referring it to their employees.

Eventually, each employee will receive a long e-mail, containing many or all of the above-mentioned summaries, from every level of management; reading the full result is rarely a requirement. Curious or ambitious employees are considered more likely to read the result; task-centered employees, however, are not.

Communications management is the systematic planning, implementing, monitoring, and revision of all the channels of communication within an organization, and between organizations; it also includes the organization and dissemination of new communication directives connected with an organization, network, or communications technology. Aspects of communications management include developing corporate communication strategies, designing internal and external communications directives, and managing the flow of information, including online communication. New technology forces constant innovation on the part of communications managers.

Journalism

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Journalism is the [craft](#) of conveying [news](#), descriptive material and [comment](#) via a widening spectrum of [media](#). These include [newspapers](#), [magazines](#), [radio](#) and [television](#), the [internet](#) and even, more recently, the [cellphone](#) (or [mobile phone](#)). Journalists—be they [writers](#), [editors](#) or [photographers](#); broadcast presenters or producers—serve as the chief purveyors of [information](#) and opinion in contemporary mass [society](#). According to BBC journalist, Andrew Marr, "News is what the consensus of journalists determines it to be." ^[1]

From informal beginnings in the [Europe](#) of the [18th century](#), stimulated by the arrival of mechanized [printing](#)—in due course by [mass production](#) and in the [20th century](#) by [electronic communications technology](#)—today's engines of journalistic enterprise include large [corporations](#) with global reach.

The formal [status](#) of journalism has varied historically and, still varies vastly, from country to country. The [modern state](#) and [hierarchical power structures](#) in general have tended to see the unrestricted flow of information as a potential threat, and inimical to their own proper function. [Hitler](#) described the Press as a "machine for mass instruction," ideally, a "kind of school for adults." ^[2] Journalism at its most vigorous, by contrast, tends to be propelled by the implications at least of the attitude epitomized by the Australian journalist [John Pilger](#): "Secretive power loathes journalists who do their job, who push back screens, peer behind façades, lift rocks. Opprobrium from on high is their badge of honour."

The rapid rise of Internet technology, in particular the advent of [blogging](#) and [social networking software](#), further destabilize journalism as traditionally understood and its practitioners as a distinct professional category. Combined with the increasing leakage of [advertising](#) revenue from pre-existing journalistic media into the internet, the full impact of the arrival of the [citizen journalist](#)—potentially positive (proliferation having thus far proved more difficult to police) as well as negative—is yet to be seen.

Mandatory Reading: Theaker, Chapter 15; *Consumer Public Relations*

Marketing

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Marketing is an integrated communications-based process through which individuals and communities are informed or persuaded that existing and newly-identified needs and wants may be satisfied by the products and services of others.

Definition

Marketing is used to create the customer, to keep the customer and to satisfy the customer. With the customer as the focus of its activities, it can be concluded that Marketing is one of the premier components of Business Management - the other being Operations (or Production). Other services and management activities such as Human Resources, Accounting, Law and Legal aspects can be "bought in" or "contracted out".

Marketing is defined by the [American Marketing Association](#) as the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.^[1] The term developed from the original meaning which referred literally to going to a market to buy or sell goods or services.

The [Chartered Institute of Marketing](#) defines marketing as "The management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably."^[2]

Marketing practice tended to be seen as a creative industry in the past, which included [advertising](#), [distribution](#) and [selling](#). However, because the academic study of marketing makes extensive use of [social sciences](#), [psychology](#), [sociology](#), [mathematics](#), [economics](#), [anthropology](#) and [neuroscience](#), the profession is now widely recognized as a science, allowing numerous universities to offer Master-of-Science (MSc) programmes. The overall process starts with marketing research and goes through [market segmentation](#), business planning and execution, ending with pre and post-sales promotional activities. It is also related to many of the [creative](#) arts. The marketing literature is also adept at re-inventing itself and its vocabulary according to the times and the culture.

Seen from a systems point of view, [sales process engineering](#) views marketing as a set of processes that are interconnected and interdependent with other functions^[3], whose methods can be improved using a variety of relatively new approaches.

The Four Ps

Main article: [Marketing mix](#)

In the early 1960s, Professor Neil Borden at [Harvard Business School](#) identified a number of company performance actions that can influence the consumer decision to purchase goods or services. Borden suggested that all those actions of the company represented a “[Marketing Mix](#)”. Professor [E. Jerome McCarthy](#), at the [Michigan State University](#) in the early 1960s, suggested that the Marketing Mix contained 4 elements: product, price, place and promotion.

- [Product](#): The product aspects of marketing deal with the specifications of the actual goods or services, and how it relates to the [end-user](#)'s needs and wants. The scope of a product generally includes supporting elements such as warranties, guarantees, and support.
- [Pricing](#): This refers to the process of setting a [price](#) for a product, including discounts. The price need not be monetary; it can simply be what is exchanged for the product or services, e.g. time, energy, or attention. Methods of setting prices optimally are in the domain of [pricing science](#).
- [Placement](#) (or [distribution](#)): refers to how the product gets to the customer; for example, point-of-sale placement or [retailing](#). This third P has also sometimes been called *Place*, referring to the channel by which a product or service is sold (e.g. online vs. retail), which geographic region or industry, to which segment (young adults, families, business people), etc. also referring to how the environment in which the product is sold in can affect sales.
- [Promotion](#): This includes [advertising](#), [sales promotion](#), including [promotional education](#), [publicity](#), and [personal selling](#). [Branding](#) refers to the various methods of promoting the product, [brand](#), or company.

These four elements are often referred to as the [marketing mix](#),^[4] which a marketer can use to craft a [marketing plan](#).

The four Ps model is most useful when marketing low value consumer products. Industrial products, services, high value consumer products require adjustments to this model. [Services marketing](#) must account for the unique nature of services.

Industrial or [B2B](#) marketing must account for the long term contractual agreements that are typical in [supply chain](#) transactions. [Relationship marketing](#) attempts to do this by looking at marketing from a long term relationship perspective rather than individual transactions.

As a counter to this, Morgan, in *Riding the Waves of Change* (Jossey-Bass, 1988), suggests that one of the greatest limitations of the 4 Ps approach "is that it unconsciously emphasizes the inside-out view (looking from the company outwards), whereas the essence of marketing should be the outside-in approach".

In order to recognize the different aspects of selling **services**, as opposed to **Products**, a further three Ps were added to make a range of Seven Ps for service industries:

Process - the way in which orders are handled and customers satisfied

Physical Evidence - what customers can see of the selling surroundings- the shop style, the buying experience

People - the people meeting and dealing with the customers.

As markets have become more satisfied, the 7 Ps have become relevant to those companies selling products, as well as those solely involved with services: customers now differentiate between sellers of goods by the service they receive in the process from the people involved.

Some authors cite a further P - **Packaging** - this is thought by many to be part of **Product**, but in certain markets (Japan, China for example) and with certain products (perfume, cosmetics) the packaging of a product has a greater importance - maybe even than the product itself.

Branding

Main article: [Brand](#)

A brand is a name, term, design, symbol, or other feature that distinguishes products and services from competitive offerings. A brand is more than a name, design or symbol. Brand reflects personality of the company which is organizational culture.

A brand has also been defined as an identifiable entity that makes a specific value based on promises made and kept either actively or passively.

Branding means creating reference of certain products in mind.

[Co-branding](#) involves marketing activity involving two or more products.

Publicity

Publicity involves attaining space in media, without having to pay directly for such coverage. As an example, an organization may have the launch of a new product covered by a newspaper or TV news segment. This benefits the firm in question since it is making consumers aware of its product, without necessarily paying a newspaper or television station to cover the event.

[_]Advertising

Advertising occurs when a firm directly pays a media channel to publicize its product. Common examples of this include TV and radio adverts, billboards, branding, sponsorship, etc.

Marketing and PR- an Uneasy Relationship?

How Public Relations and Marketing Co-exist

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■ [Sep 10, 2009](#), Suite 101.com

It is not uncommon for one department to be little more than the subdivision or tool of the other. To the chagrin of many PR professionals, it is almost invariably PR that is the absorbed department, coming under the control of Marketing.

Gregory (2006a) regards this as a problem in establishing better regard for the value of Public Relations. She comments:

“...for many marketing people public relations is all about getting free ‘publicity’ in the media to support the promotion of products and services to consumers.”

Marketing and PR as Rivals?

Gregory’s comment is made in the context of a brief review of the relationship between marketing and PR. She describes it as ‘fractious’ (Gregory 2006a), a view supported by others who have termed it a ‘Power struggle’ (Oliver 2006) and ‘*Adversarial*’ (Theaker 2006). Marketing and PR can tend to encroach on each other’s territory, and compete for their organisations regard or resources. Marketing may historically have been the more valued function; although PR is gaining higher status, marketing still receives larger budgets (Kitchen 1997, cited Theaker 2006).

Duties of Marketing and PR

Separation of the duties of PR and Marketing can be difficult, depending on how they are organised. Hallahan (1992, cited Grunig and Grunig 1998) proposes six possible arrangements for the two functions in a business: (1) *celibate* (Either PR or Marketing exists), (2) *co-existent* (operating independently), (3) *combative* (operating at odds), (4) *co-optive* (one function usurps the other), (5) *coordinated* (the two functions independent but working together) or (6) *combined* (the two functions share a single unit). If combined, PR and Marketing form a single ‘communications’ function; If PR is then the responsibility of a marketing manager, it would be more likely to be relegated to a supportive tool of that department.

Defining Marketing and PR

Theorists propose that the lack of an agreed definition of PR contributes to its identity issues and continual overlapping with other disciplines like marketing. Marketing definitions are consistent, incorporating profitability and the customer, e.g. the CIM definition;

'Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably.' ([CIM 2006](#))

By contrast there are various definitions of PR in circulation. The following example is just one of many, and not one has been accepted as the definitive definition.

'Influencing behaviour to achieve objectives through the effective management of relationships and communications.' (DTI and IPR 2003, cited Edwards 2006 pp 6)

This difficulty of providing an agreed definition does also illustrate just how broad PR's remit can be, and how many different roles practitioners may fill. This factor allows for blurring between other disciplines.

To confuse matters, Marketing PR is thriving, and agencies operate Marketing campaigns centred on PR techniques.

PR was identified as the type of marketing activity that offered the best return on investment for start up for small to medium enterprises (Financial Times, cited Pritchard et al 2006) and a marketing communications campaign was PR weeks' 'Campaign of the Year 2006'; The 'Nintendogs' launch campaign by Cake Group.

However most PR practitioners are anxious to highlight this as just part of their remit- marketing and related services remains a very small part of what PR actually is and what it can do.

Propaganda

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Propaganda is communication aimed at influencing the attitude of a community toward some cause or position. As opposed to [impartially](#) providing information, propaganda in its most basic sense, presents information primarily to influence an audience. Propaganda often presents facts selectively (thus [lying](#) by omission) to encourage a particular synthesis, or uses loaded messages to produce an emotional rather than rational response to the information presented. The desired result is a change of the attitude toward the subject in the target audience to further a political agenda.

The English term is an 18th century coinage, from the Latin feminine gerund of *propagare* "to propagate", originally in [Congregatio de Propaganda Fide](#) "Congregation for Propagating the Faith," a committee of cardinals established 1622 by [Gregory XV](#). In its turn, the word *propagare* is related to the word *propages*, "a slip, a cutting of a vine"^[1] and refers to the [gardener's](#) practice to disseminate plants by planting shoots.^[2]

The term is not pejorative in origin, the political sense dates to [World War I](#).

Below are a number of techniques for generating propaganda:

[Ad hominem](#)

A Latin phrase that has come to mean attacking your opponent, as opposed to attacking their arguments.

[Ad nauseam](#)

This argument approach uses tireless repetition of an idea. An idea, especially a simple slogan, that is repeated enough times, may begin to be taken as the truth. This approach works best when media sources are limited and controlled by the propagator.

[Appeal to authority](#)

Appeals to authority cite prominent figures to support a position, idea, argument, or course of action.

[Appeal to fear](#)

Appeals to fear seek to build support by instilling anxieties and panic in the general population, for example, [Joseph Goebbels](#) exploited Theodore Kaufman's [Germany Must Perish!](#) to claim that the Allies sought the extermination of the German people.

[Appeal to prejudice](#)

Using loaded or emotive terms to attach value or moral goodness to believing the proposition.

Bandw agon

Bandw agon and "inevitable-victory" appeals attempt to persuade the target audience to join in and take the course of action that "everyone else is taking."

Inevitable victory: invites those not already on the bandw agon to join those already on the road to certain victory. Those already or at least partially on the bandw agon are reassured that staying aboard is their best course of action.

Join the crowd: This technique reinforces people's natural desire to be on the winning side. This technique is used to convince the audience that a program is an expression of an irresistible mass movement and that it is in their best interest to join.

Black-and-White fallacy

Presenting only two choices, with the product or idea being propagated as the better choice. (e.g., "You are either with us, or you are with the enemy")

Beautiful people

The type of propaganda that deals with famous people or depicts attractive, happy people. This makes other people think that if they buy a product or follow a certain ideology, they too will be happy or successful.

Big Lie

The repeated articulation of a complex of events that justify subsequent action. The descriptions of these events have elements of truth, and the "big lie" generalizations merge and eventually supplant the public's accurate perception of the underlying events. After World War I the German Stab in the back explanation of the cause of their defeat became a justification for Nazi re-militarization and revanchist aggression.

Common man

The "**plain folks**" or "common man" approach attempts to convince the audience that the propagandist's positions reflect the common sense of the people. It is designed to win the confidence of the audience by communicating in the common manner and style of the target audience. Propagandists use ordinary language and mannerisms (and clothe their message in face-to-face and audiovisual communications) in attempting to identify their point of view with that of the average person. For example, a propaganda leaflet may make an argument on a macroeconomic issue, such as unemployment insurance benefits, using everyday terms: "given that the country has little money during this recession, we should stop paying unemployment

benefits to those who do not work, because that is like maxing out all your credit cards during a tight period, when you should be tightening your belt."

Demonizing the enemy

Making individuals from the opposing nation, from a different ethnic group, or those who support the opposing view point appear to be subhuman (e.g., the [Vietnam War](#)-era term "gooks" for [National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam](#) aka Vietcong, (or 'VC') soldiers), worthless, or immoral, through suggestion or false accusations.

Direct order

This technique hopes to simplify the decision making process by using images and words to tell the audience exactly what actions to take, eliminating any other possible choices. Authority figures can be used to give the order, overlapping it with the [Appeal to authority](#) technique, but not necessarily. The [Uncle Sam](#) "I want you" image is an example of this technique.

Disinformation

The creation or deletion of information from public records, in the purpose of making a false record of an event or the actions of a person or organization, including outright [forgery](#) of photographs, motion pictures, broadcasts, and sound recordings as well as printed documents.

Euphoria

The use of an event that generates euphoria or happiness, or using an appealing event to boost morale. Euphoria can be created by declaring a holiday, making luxury items available, or mounting a military parade with marching bands and patriotic messages.

Flag-waving

An attempt to justify an action on the grounds that doing so will make one more patriotic, or in some way benefit a group, country, or idea. The feeling of patriotism this technique attempts to inspire may not necessarily diminish or entirely omit one's capability for rational examination of the matter in question.

Glittering generalities

Glittering generalities are emotionally appealing words applied to a product or idea, but which present no concrete argument or analysis. A famous example is the campaign slogan "Ford has a better idea!"

Half-truth

A half-truth is a deceptive statement, which may come in several forms and includes some element of truth. The statement might be partly true, the statement may be totally true but only

part of the whole truth, or it may utilize some deceptive element, such as improper punctuation, or double meaning, especially if the intent is to deceive, evade blame or misrepresent the truth.

[Intentional vagueness](#)

Generalities are deliberately vague so that the audience may supply its own interpretations. The intention is to move the audience by use of undefined phrases, without analyzing their validity or attempting to determine their reasonableness or application. The intent is to cause people to draw their own interpretations rather than simply being presented with an explicit idea. In trying to "figure out" the propaganda, the audience forgoes judgment of the ideas presented. Their validity, reasonableness and application may still be considered.

[Labeling](#)

A [Euphemism](#) is used when the propagandist attempts to increase the perceived quality, credibility, or credence of a particular ideal. A [Dysphemism](#) is used when the intent of the propagandist is to discredit, diminish the perceived quality, or hurt the perceived righteousness of the Mark. By creating a 'label' or 'category' or 'faction' of a population, it is much easier to make an example of these larger bodies, because they can uplift or defame the Mark without actually incurring legal-defamation. Example: "Liberal" is a dysphemism intended to diminish the perceived credibility of a particular Mark. By taking a displeasing argument presented by a Mark, the propagandist can quote that person, and then attack 'liberals' in an attempt to both (1) create a political battle-axe of unaccountable aggression and (2) diminish the quality of the Mark. If the propagandist uses the label on too-many perceivably credible individuals, muddying up the word can be done by broadcasting bad-examples of 'liberals' into the media. [Labeling](#) can be thought of as a sub-set of [Guilt by association](#), another logical fallacy.

[Name-calling](#)

Propagandists use the *name-calling technique* to incite fears and arouse prejudices in their hearers in the intent that the bad names will cause hearers to construct a negative opinion about a group or set of beliefs or ideas that the propagandist would wish hearers to denounce. The method is intended to provoke conclusions about a matter apart from impartial examinations of facts. Name-calling is thus a substitute for rational, fact-based arguments against the an idea or belief on its own merits.^[7]

[Obtain disapproval](#) or [Reductio ad Hitlerum](#)

This technique is used to persuade a target audience to disapprove of an action or idea by suggesting that the idea is popular with groups hated, feared, or held in contempt by the target audience. Thus if a group that supports a certain policy is led to believe that undesirable, subversive, or contemptible people support the same policy, then the members of the group may decide to change their original position. This is a form of bad logic, where a is said to equal X, and b is said to equal X, therefore, a = b.

Oversimplification

Favorable generalities are used to provide simple answers to complex social, political, economic, or military problems.

Quotes out of Context

Selective _ing quotes to change meanings—political documentaries designed to discr_ an opponent or an opposing political view point often make use of this technique.

Rationalization

Individuals or groups may use favorable generalities to rationalize questionable acts or beliefs. Vague and pleasant phrases are often used to justify such actions or beliefs.

Red herring

Presenting data or issues that, w hile compelling, are irrelevant to the argument at hand, and then claiming that it validates the argument.

Repetition

This type of propaganda deals w ith a jingle or w ord that is repeated over and over again, thus getting it stuck in someones head, so they can buy the product. The "Repetition" method has been described previously.

Scapegoating

Assigning blame to an individual or group, thus alleviating feelings of guilt from responsible parties and/or distracting attention from the need to fix the problem for w hich blame is being assigned.

Slogans

A slogan is a brief, striking phrase that may include labeling and stereotyping. Although slogans may be enlisted to support reasoned ideas, in practice they tend to act only as emotional appeals. Opponents of the US's invasion and occupation of Iraq use the slogan "blood for oil" to suggest that the invasion and its human losses w as done to access Iraq's oil riches. On the other hand, "haw ks" who argue that the US should continue to fight in Iraq use the slogan "cut and run" to suggest that it w ould be cow ardlly or weak to w ithdraw from Iraq. Similarly, the names of the military campaigns, such as "enduring freedom" or "just cause", may also be regarded to be slogans, devised to influence people.

Stereotyping

This technique attempts to arouse prejudices in an audience by labeling the object of the propaganda campaign as something the target audience fears, hates, loathes, or finds undesirable. For instance, reporting on a foreign country or social group may focus on the stereotypical traits that the reader expects, even though they are far from being representative of the whole country or group; such reporting often focuses on the [anecdotal](#). In graphic propaganda, including war posters, this might include portraying enemies with stereotyped racial features.

[Testimonial](#)

Testimonials are quotations, in or out of context, especially cited to support or reject a given policy, action, program, or personality. The reputation or the role (expert, respected public figure, etc.) of the individual giving the statement is exploited. The testimonial places the official sanction of a respected person or authority on a propaganda message. This is done in an effort to cause the target audience to identify itself with the authority or to accept the authority's opinions and beliefs as its own. *See also, [damaging quotation](#)*

[Transfer](#)

Also known as **association**, this is a technique that involves projecting the positive or negative qualities of one person, entity, object, or value onto another to make the second more acceptable or to discredit it. It evokes an emotional response, which stimulates the target to identify with recognized authorities. Often highly visual, this technique often utilizes symbols superimposed over other visual images. These symbols may be used in place of words; for example, placing swastikas on or around a picture of an opponent to associate the opponent with Nazism.

[Unstated assumption](#)

This technique is used when the propaganda concept that the propagandist intends to transmit would seem less credible if explicitly stated. The concept is instead repeatedly assumed or implied.

[Virtue words](#)

These are words in the value system of the target audience that produce a positive image when attached to a person or issue. Peace, happiness, security, wise leadership, freedom, "The Truth", etc. are virtue words. In countries such as the U.S. religiosity is seen as a virtue, making associations to this quality affectively beneficial. *See [Transfer](#).*

Case Study: Iraq War

The [United States](#) and [Iraq](#) both contributed to the use of propaganda and like strategy during the [Iraq War](#). With the growing discomfort in the hearts of the American and Iraqi people, there needed to be a way to gain the support of the on-going war. The United States established

campaigns towards the American people on the justifications of the war while using similar tactics to bring down [Saddam Hussein](#)'s regime in Iraq.^[221] By looking at the ways America and Iraq used propaganda to benefit their individual views it is clear that both sides had similar ideas on how to gain the support needed to win the war.

Iraqi Propaganda

The Iraqi insurgency had a plan, and that was to gain as much support as possible by using violence as their propaganda tool.^[222] By using the inspiration of the [Vietcong](#)^[231], the [insurgents](#) were using rapid movement to keep the [coalition](#) off-balance.^[222] By using low-technology strategies to convey their messages, they were able to gain support.^[241] Graffiti slogans were used on walls and houses praising the virtues of many group leaders while condemning the Iraqi government. Others used flyers, leaflets, articles and self-published newspapers and magazines to get the point across.^[241]

Low-tech methods were most common in Iraqi propaganda however, they were also proficient in high-tech methods. The insurgents would produce CDs and DVDs and distribute them in communities that the Iraq and the [U.S. Government](#) were trying to influence.^[251] The insurgents designed advertisements that cost a fraction of what the U.S. was spending on their ads aimed at the same people in Iraq with much more success.^[261] In addition, the Iraqis also created and established an [Arabic language](#) television station to transmit information to the people of Iraq about the rumors and lies that the Americans were spreading about the war.^[231]

American Propaganda in Iraq

For the U.S. to achieve their aim of a moderate, pro-western Iraq, the U.S. authorities have been careful to avoid conflict with Islamic culture that would produce a passionate reaction from the Iraqis. As a result, differentiating between "good" and "bad" Muslims has proved challenging for the U.S.^[231]

The U.S. implemented something called "[Black Propaganda](#)" by creating false radio personalities that would disseminate pro-American information but supposedly run by the supporters of Saddam Hussein. One radio station used was Radio Tikrit.^[231] Another example of America's attempt with Black Propaganda is that the U.S. paid Iraqis to publish articles written by American troops in their newspapers under the idea that they are unbiased and real accounts; this was brought forth by the [New York Times](#) in 2005.^[261] The article stated that it was the [Lincoln Group](#) who had been hired by the U.S. government to create the propaganda, however their names were later cleared from any wrongdoing.^[271]

The U.S. was more successful with the "[Voice of America](#)" campaign, which is an old [Cold War](#) tactic that exploited people's desire for information.^[231] While the information they gave out to the Iraqis was truthful, they were in a high degree of competition with the opposing forces after the censorship of the Iraqi media was lifted with the removal of Saddam from power.^[281] If the U.S. had wished to be more successful with their news media they could have followed

Hussein's lead and prohibited Satellite TV and popular access to the internet directly after the Fall of Hussein. ^[28]

In addition to the employment of Black Propaganda and other types of mass communication attempts in Iraq, the U.S. also used many different leaflets that were pro-western in nature. Some of which read that the [no-fly zones](#) were for the safety of Iraqis and others attempt to persuade Iraqis to become civil servants for the post-Saddam era in Iraq. ^[29]

In November 2005, the [Chicago Tribune](#) and the [Los Angeles Times](#), alleged that the [United States military](#) had [manipulated news](#) reported in Iraqi media in an effort to cast a favorable light on its actions while demoralizing the [insurgency](#). Lt. Col. [Barry Johnson](#), a military spokesman in Iraq, said the program is "an important part of countering misinformation in the news by insurgents", while a spokesman for former [Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld](#) said the allegations of manipulation were troubling if true. The [Department of Defense](#) has confirmed the existence of the program. ^[30] [The New York Times](#) published an article about how the Pentagon has started to use contractors with little experience in journalism or public relations to plant articles in the Iraqi press.

These articles are usually written by US soldiers without attribution or are attributed to a non-existent organization called the "[International Information Center](#)." Planting propaganda stories in newspapers was done by both the Allies and Central Powers in the First World War and the Axis and Allies in the Second; this is the latest version of this technique. ^{[31][32][33]}

Propaganda aimed at Americans

Media such as daily news coverage, advertisements, videos, pictures, polls, and various others are indirectly controlled by the news media. The country has strayed from its popular form of mass advertising media and focused more on its biased coverage found in the news. ^[21][neutrality disputed](#) This is seen as a credible source, allowing information on the current situation to be known to the general public. As noted in the book *Selling Intervention & War* by Jon Western, the president is "selling the war" to the public. ^[34]

People had their initial reactions to the War on Terror, but with more biased and persuading information, Iraq as a whole has been negatively targeted. ^[35] America's goal was to remove Saddam Hussein's power in Iraq with allegations of possible weapons of mass destruction related to [Osama Bin Laden](#). ^[36] Video and picture coverage in the news has shown shocking and disturbing images of [torture](#) and other evils being done under the [Iraqi Government](#). ^[36] This is one way United States media is fabricating the enemy. By providing purely negative and exaggerated alleged evidence on the situation, Americans are provided with the generally accepted opinion of hatred towards the evil in Iraq. While torture and mass murder of the civilian population was common in Iraq, there were positive positions. The Iraqi government's strong military position was able to keep terrorists under control, a position that changed quickly after that fall of the regime.

PART II: PLANNING

Mandatory Reading: Theaker, Chapter 4: *Public Relations and Management*

Communications strategy

I&DEA, Improvement and Development Agency: <http://www.idea.gov.uk/>

Knowledge management is often an umbrella term for a series of activities – perhaps grouped into themes – aimed at improving the way an organisation shares and applies knowledge to better serve the needs of its clients.

A knowledge management strategy provides the vision, channels, skills and tools for managing knowledge throughout an organisation. It should be managed as a change initiative.

By adopting a knowledge management approach, an organisation will be changing or transforming information and knowledge management practices to achieve organisational objectives.

Effective internal communications are essential for managing or implementing change.

Why have a communication strategy?

The communication strategy is a cornerstone of the knowledge management strategy. It ensures that the key messages of the strategy are correctly communicated. It raises awareness and understanding and helps embed the knowledge management tools and techniques into the organisation.

The communication plan should have the objective of changing attitudes and behaviour among key groups on a day-to-day basis.

As part of the strategy, discreet communications are tasked with:

- raising awareness of change where and when appropriate among the relevant audiences
- imparting knowledge and understanding of new ways of working, processes, systems, roles, responsibilities, and so on
- moving individuals to act in these new ways by providing tangible examples of knowledge management in action and appropriate carrots and sticks.

These carrots and sticks might include:

- incentives and rewards for positive behaviours are being developed
- knowledge management competencies linked into appraisal objectives
- senior level staff expected to lead by example
- encouraging peer challenge.

How do you design a communication strategy?

Information and knowledge will have different meaning and value to individuals and therefore different parts of the knowledge management strategy will affect different people at different times. Communications should aim to provide timely information in appropriate ways.

When implementing a complex and ongoing strategy it is important to avoid 'initiative overload'. Individuals may become frustrated by constant and potentially conflicting communications.

There are two approaches to communication:

- the 'big bang' branded approach
- the 'stealth' approach.

The former creates high visibility and impact and often includes 'branding' of the knowledge management strategy. However, it is a higher-risk approach as failures will be as well documented and visible as successes.

The latter focuses on individual deliverables and how they can be used. It is a lower-risk communication strategy but has less impact. Deliverables may not be linked to the overall strategy.

Both strategies have merit and organisational preferences will influence the choice. Senior management need to endorse the approach taken.

What is in the communication strategy?

The communication strategy should contain different approaches that can be applied depending on the message, the audience and the planning required.

Use the 'MAP model' to put together an action plan for each area of the strategy, as well as for the overall programme management. MAP stands for: **m**essages, **a**udiences, **p**lanning.

A completed MAP will provide a useful one-page summary about the key messages, target audiences and milestones. It can be used as a reminder for the programme team about communications objectives over the year, and to brief project partners and other stakeholders.

In order to do this you need to:

- establish key messages for your programme
- establish your important audiences, with sufficient detail – for example, not just chief executives and leaders
- identify the key communications objectives, milestones and deliverables for your programme area.

Questions used to apply the MAP model are shown below. If the knowledge management strategy is broken into themes or projects, a communications strategy should be prepared for each area.

Messages – what do you want to say?

- How does your work contribute to local government improvement?
- How does your work relate to your corporate objectives and key priorities of local government?
- What is your unique selling point?
- What is the benefit of your product or service to your audience?
- What is the call to action for customers?
- Is there any evidence of previous impact that you can use to substantiate the message?

Audience – who are you saying it to?

- Customers
- Consider sub-groups of customers and other key stakeholders. Consider groups who hold a certain opinion about an issue that you want to change
- Partners, for example, central government departments, corporate sponsors, other local government bodies
- How will your audience relate to your messages? Have you tailored your messages to your audiences?

Planning – saying the right thing to the right people at the right time

- What are the key dates for your programme in the coming year?
- What are the existing and future opportunities to reach your audience? For example, communities of practice (CoPs), events, published outputs.
- What resources do you have for communications and marketing – time, money, expertise?
- Is there one point of contact in your team for working closely with communications and marketing team?
- How will you measure success? Have you considered your communications objectives, timeline, milestones and deliverables?

How can you measure the effectiveness of communication?

When implementing a knowledge management strategy, it is important to assess the impact of the different deliverables or themes.

This can be done in the form of staff surveys, through consultation procedures, workshops and so on.

Criteria to measure effectiveness should look at:

- **Awareness** – levels of awareness of both the knowledge management programme (when branded and or communicated as such) and product or outputs of the programme
- **Understanding** – survey and feedback evidence to gauge the extent to which knowledge management is understood and applied
- **Conviction** – attitudes, beliefs and values
- **Action or repeat action** – positive action, behaviour, evidence.

The knowledge management strategy should aim to move individuals from awareness to action, and the communications strategy should support this aim.

Leadership and communication

The importance attached to leadership and communication in the development, roll-out and implementation of any knowledge management strategy is crucial.

The principles of knowledge management as well as responsibility and ownership of the strategy must be aligned with:

- specific leadership objectives
- business strategy
- improvement planning.

This provides a real challenge. Do not lose sight of the fact that improving KM is a collective senior management activity.

There is a clear need for visible and committed corporate sponsorship from the top level of the organisation. Senior staff need to take responsibility for leading the programme, for communication, and for demonstrating the importance of KM. They must ensure that accountabilities are clearly defined.

Six Steps to Developing Your Public Relations and Media Plan

By [Laura Lake](#), About.com

Marketing experts will tell you that a well planned public relations campaign is often far more effective than advertising. This tutorial will assist you in developing and creating the core of your public relations campaign in six easy steps.

- **Step 1:** Define and write down your objectives for your publicity or media plan.

How will you design your public relations campaign? Will it be designed to:

- Establish your expertise among your peers, the press, or your potential clients or customers?
- Build goodwill among your customer, supplier, or your community?
- Create and reinforce your brand and professional corporate image?
- Inform and create good perceptions regarding your company and services?
- Assist you in introducing a new service or product to your market?
- Generate sales or leads?
- Mitigate the impact of negative publicity and/or corporate crisis?

You may be wondering why I am asking you these things at the beginning of a tutorial that is supposed to show you how to create and your develop publicity plan? The answer is easy. In order for your publicity and media plan to be successful it's first most important to determine and define your objective. With a clear objective in mind you have laid the ground work to the complete the remainder of this tutorial.

- **Step 2:** Define your goals in achieving this objective. It is important that your goals be specific, measurable, results-oriented and time-bound. These goals must be in-line with your overall business, marketing, and sales objectives.
- **Step 3:** Determine who your target audience consists of. Who is it that you want to reach with this campaign? What do you want your key message to be?
- **Step 4:** Develop a schedule for your public relation campaigns. Create synergy by coinciding your public relations plan with other marketing and sales efforts.
- **Step 5:** Develop your plan of attack. What communication vehicles will you use to get your message to the public? Examples may include:

- Press releases
- Articles
- Customer Success Stories
- Letters to the editor
- Press Conferences, Interview , or Media Tours
- Radio, Television, or Press Interviews
- Seminars or Speaking Engagements
- Event Sponsorships

Select three from the list and beginning researching and developing your approach.

- **Step 6:** Put measures in place to track the results of your PR Campaign. After each campaign sit down and review the results. Did you achieve the defined objectives and goals of this campaign? Should you consider modifying your original plan? If so, how and why?

7 Steps to Planning a Productive and Successful Promotional Campaign

By [Laura Lake](#), About.com

When planning a promotional campaign keep in mind that a campaign generally consists of three desired outcomes:

Outcome 1: Your promotional message reaches your intended and targeted audience.

Outcome 2: Your message is understood by your audience.

Outcome 3: Your message stimulates the recipients and they take action.

The question is how do you achieve these outcomes with your campaign? The process is easy, but it takes "planning" time.

Here are seven steps that will get your campaign off to the right start.

- **Step 1: Assess Marketing Communication Opportunities.**
It's important in this first step to examine and understand the needs of your target market. Who is your message going out to? Current users, influencers among individuals, decision-makers, groups, or the general public?
- **Step 2: What Communication Channels Will You Use?**
In the first step of planning you should have defined the markets, products, and environments. This information will assist you in deciding which communication channels will be most beneficial. Will you use personal communication channels such as face to face meeting, telephone contact, or perhaps a personal sales presentation? Or will the nonpersonal communication such as newspapers, magazines, or direct mail work better?
- **Step 3: Determine Your Objectives**
Keep in mind that your objectives in a promotional campaign are slightly different from your marketing campaign. Promotional objectives should be stated in terms of long or short-term behaviors by people who have been exposed to your promotional communication. These objectives must be clearly stated, measurable, and appropriate to the phase of market development.
- **Step 4: Determine Your Promotion Mix**
This is where you will need to allocate resources among sales promotion, advertising, publicity, and of course personal selling. Don't skimp on either of these areas. You must create an awareness among your buyers in order for your promotional campaign to succeed. A well rounded promotion will use all these methods in some capacity.

- **Step 5: Develop Your Promotional Message**

This is the time that you will need to sit down with your team and focus on the content, appeal, structure, format, and source of the message. Keep in mind in promotional campaigns appeal and execution always work together.

- **Step 6: Develop the Promotion Budget**

This is the exciting part. You must now determine the total promotion budget. This involves determining cost breakdowns per territory and promotional mix elements. Take some time to break down allocations and determine the affordability, percent of sales, and competitive parity. By breaking down these costs you will get a better idea on gauging the success potential of your campaign.

- **Step 7: Determine Campaign Effectiveness**

After marketing communications are assigned, the promotional plan must be formally defined in a written document. In this document you should include situation analysis, copy platform, timetables for effective integration of promotional elements with elements in your marketing mix. You will also need to determine how you will measure the effectiveness once it is implemented. How did the actual performance measure up to planned objectives. You'll need to gather this information by asking your target market whether they recognized or recall specific advertising messages, what they remember about the message, how they felt about the message, and if their attitudes toward the company were affected by the message.

ANALYTICAL TOOLS

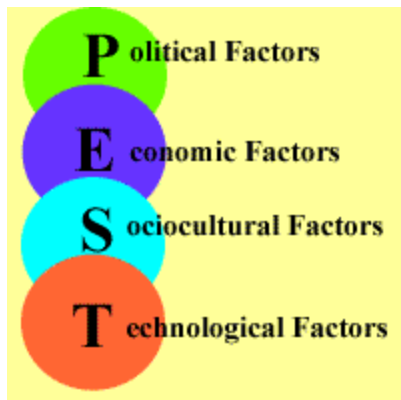
PEST Analysis

What is PEST Analysis?

http://www.marketingteacher.com/Lessons/lesson_PEST.htm

It is very important that an organization considers its environment before beginning the marketing process. In fact, environmental analysis should be continuous and feed all aspects of planning. The organization's marketing environment is made up of:

1. The internal environment e.g. staff (or internal customers), office technology, wages and finance, etc.
2. The micro-environment e.g. our external customers, agents and distributors, suppliers, our competitors, etc.
3. The macro-environment e.g. Political (and legal) forces, Economic forces, Sociocultural forces, and Technological forces. These are known as **PEST** factors.



Political Factors.

The political arena has a huge influence upon the regulation of businesses, and the spending power of consumers and other businesses. You must consider issues such as:

1. How stable is the political environment?
2. Will government policy influence laws that regulate or tax your business?
3. What is the government's position on marketing ethics?
4. What is the government's policy on the economy?

5. Does the government have a view on culture and religion?
6. Is the government involved in trading agreements such as EU, NAFTA, ASEAN, or others?

Economic Factors.

Marketers need to consider the state of a trading economy in the short and long-terms. This is especially true when planning for international marketing. You need to look at:

1. Interest rates.
2. The level of inflation Employment level per capita.
3. Long-term prospects for the economy Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, and so on.

Sociocultural Factors.

The social and cultural influences on business vary from country to country. It is very important that such factors are considered. Factors include:

1. What is the dominant religion?
2. What are attitudes to foreign products and services?
3. Does language impact upon the diffusion of products onto markets?
4. How much time do consumers have for leisure?
5. What are the roles of men and women within society?
6. How long are the population living? Are the older generations wealthy?
7. Do the population have a strong/weak opinion on green issues?

Technological Factors.

Technology is vital for competitive advantage, and is a major driver of globalization. Consider the following points:

1. Does technology allow for products and services to be made more cheaply and to a better standard of quality?
2. Do the technologies offer consumers and businesses more innovative products and services such as Internet banking, new generation mobile telephones, etc?

3. How is distribution changed by new technologies e.g. books via the Internet, flight tickets, auctions, etc?

4. Does technology offer companies a new way to communicate with consumers e.g. banners, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), etc?

The PEST or PESTLE Analysis

<http://rapidbi.com/created/pestanalysis.html>

Originally designed as a business environmental scan, the PEST or PESTLE analysis is an analysis of the external macro environment (big picture) in which a business operates. These are often factors which are beyond the control or influence of a business, however are important to be aware of when doing product development, business or strategy planning.

This page has been developed to help and support anyone with activities or projects which require use of the PESTLE analysis tool to undertake an environmental scan of an organizations operating environment.

It is important to take into account **PESTLE factors** for the following main reasons:

- Firstly, by making effective use of PESTLE analysis, you ensure that what you are doing is aligned positively with the powerful forces of change that are affecting our working environment. By taking advantage of change, you are much more likely to be successful than if your activities oppose it
- Secondly, good use of PESTLE analysis helps you avoid taking action that is likely to lead to failure for reasons beyond your control
- Thirdly, PESTLE is useful when you start a new product or service. Use of PESTLE helps you break free of assumptions, and helps you quickly adapt to the realities of the new environment

Introduction to The PESTLE Analysis tool

PESTLE analysis is a useful tool for understanding the “big picture” of the environment in which you are operating, and the opportunities and threats that lie within it. By understanding the environment in which you operate (external to your company or department), you can take advantage of the opportunities and minimize the threats.

Specifically the **PEST or PESTLE analysis** is a useful tool for understanding risks associated with market growth or decline, and as such the position, potential and direction for a business or organization.

For the purposes of this page we will focus on the PESTLE variation of the acronym.

The **PESTLE Analysis** is often used as a generic 'orientation' tool, finding out where an organization or product is in the context of what is happening outside that will at some point affect what is happening inside an organization.

A **PESTLE analysis** is a business measurement tool, looking at factors external to the organization. It is often used within a strategic **SWOT** analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis).

PESTLE is an acronym for

Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and **Environmental** factors,

which are used to assess the market for a business or organizational unit strategic plan

The **PESTLE analysis** headings are a framework for reviewing a situation, and can also be used to review a strategy or position, direction of a company, a marketing proposition, or idea. There are many variants on this model including PEST analysis and STEEPLE analysis.

Completing a **PESTLE analysis** can be a simple or complex process. It all depends how thorough you need to be. It is a good subject for workshop sessions, as undertaking this activity with only one perspective (i.e. only one person's view) can be time consuming and miss critical factors.

Use **PESTLE analysis** for business and strategic planning, marketing planning, business and product development and research reports.

The **PESTLE** template below includes sample questions or prompts, whose answers can be inserted into the relevant section of the table.

The questions are examples of discussion points, and should be altered depending on the subject of the analysis, and how you want to use it.

Make up your own **PESTLE** questions and prompts to suit the issue being analyzed and the situation (i.e. the people doing the work and the expectations of them).

It is important to clearly identify the subject of a **PESTLE analysis** (that is a clear goal or output requirement), because an analysis of this type is multi-faceted in relation to a particular business unit or proposition - if you dilute the focus you will produce an unclear picture - so be clear about the situation and perspective that you use PESTLE to analyze.

A market is defined by what is addressing it, be it a product, company, organization, brand, business unit, proposition, idea, etc, so be clear about how you define the market being analyzed, particularly if you use **PESTLE analysis** in workshops, team exercises or as a

delegated task. The **PESTLE** subject should be a clear definition of the market being addressed, which might be from any of the following standpoints:

- A company looking at its market
- A product looking at its market
- A brand in relation to its market
- A local business unit or function in a business
- A strategic option, such as entering a new market or launching a new product
- A potential acquisition
- A potential partnership
- An investment opportunity

Be sure to describe the subject for the **PESTLE analysis** clearly so that people contributing to the analysis, and those seeing the finished **PESTLE analysis**, properly understand the purpose of the **PESTLE** assessment and implications.

Next Steps

When you have identified the factors that may impact your organization, in column 2 list HOW they would impact on your organization. When this is complete, in column 3 indicate the extent to which each factor is a risk.

As a rule of thumb, for every **HIGH** risk you identify you should have at least 10 **MEDIUM** and 20 **LOW** risk item. If you identify more high risks than low risks it may be worth re-visiting your thoughts on what may or may not impact your organization. Then look at the relative importance and implication of each factor.

When you have done this you are ready to start to populate a SWOT analysis (see below).

Action Planning

When you have collated the relevant data you need to develop an action plan with [SMART objectives](#) (Specific measurable achievable relevant time-bound or [SMARTER objectives](#))

(insert subject for PEST analysis - market, business, proposition, etc.)

political

- ecological/environmental issues
- current legislation home market
- future legislation
- European/international legislation
- regulatory bodies and processes
- government policies
- government term and change
- trading policies
- funding, grants and initiatives
- home market lobbying/pressure groups
- international pressure groups
- wars and conflict

economic

- home economy situation
- home economy trends
- overseas economies and trends
- general taxation issues
- taxation specific to product/services
- seasonality/w eather issues
- market and trade cycles
- specific industry factors
- market routes and distribution
- trends
- customer/end-user drivers
- interest and exchange rates
- international trade/monetary issues

social

- lifestyle trends
- demographics
- consumer attitudes and opinions
- media view s
- law changes affecting social factors
- brand, company, technology image
- consumer buying patterns
- fashion and role models
- major events and influences
- buying access and trends
- ethnic/religious factors
- advertising and publicity
- ethical issues

technological

- competing technology development
- research funding
- associated/dependent technologies
- replacement technology/solutions
- maturity of technology
- manufacturing maturity and capacity
- information and communications
- consumer buying mechanisms/technology
- technology legislation
- innovation potential
- technology access, licencing, patents
- intellectual property issues
- global communications

SWOT ANALYSIS

The word “SWOT” stands (in English) for four words:

S = Strengths (*strong points*)

W = Weaknesses (*weak points*)

O = Opportunities

T = Threats

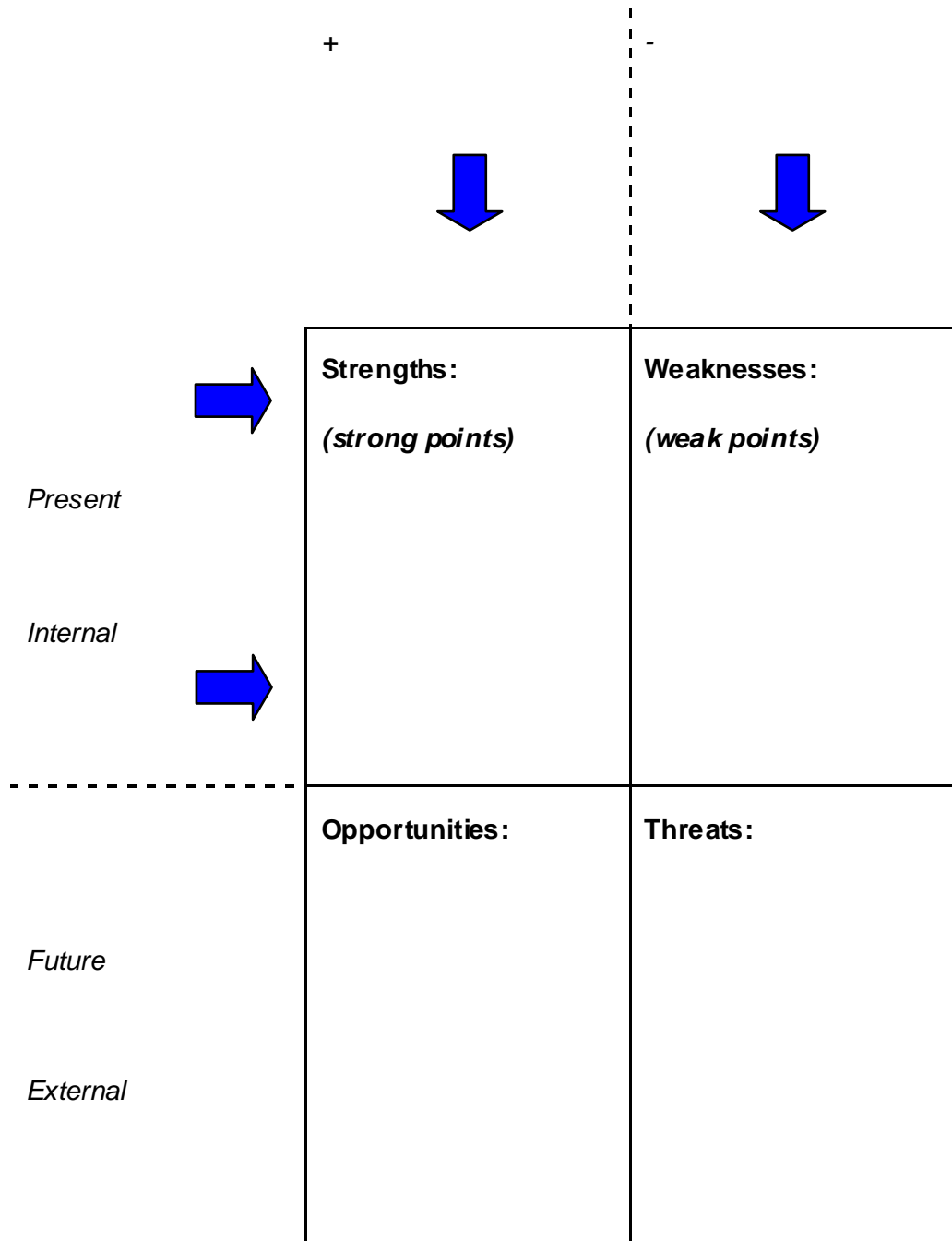
A SWOT Analysis uses a grid of four squares set out like this:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

To help clarify the differences between “Strengths” and “Opportunities” and “Weaknesses” and “Threats”, the following observations might be helpful:

- Strengths and Weaknesses tend to describe the PRESENT situation.
- Strengths and Weaknesses are typically INTERNAL to whatever is being analysed.
- Opportunities and Threats tend to describe the immediate FUTURE.
- Opportunities and Threats are typically EXTERNAL to whatever is being analysed (but they can also include internal factors).
- Strengths and Opportunities are POSITIVE factors.
- Weaknesses and Threats are NEGATIVE factors.

These characteristics are summarised in the following diagram:

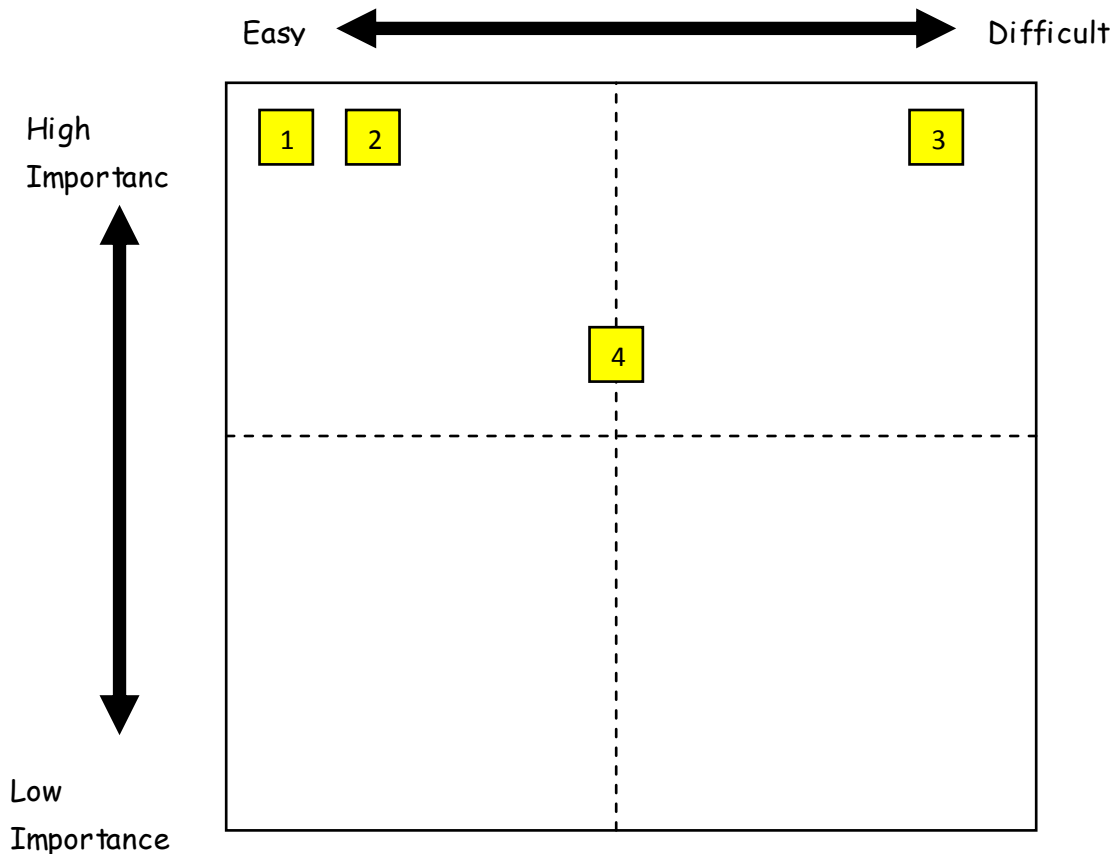


The grid is used to analyse a chosen topic.

For project design and activity planning purposes, the “w eaknesses” square of the grid is especially important. It is here that w e are likely to get ideas for appropriate activities and strategies to address weaknesses in the system.

A very effective analysis that combines consideration of “how **important**” a weakness is, with “how **practical**” it is to do something about it, can be conducted with reference to an additional grid: Grid 2.

GRID 2



The “weakness” “post-its” on the original grid can be moved across onto this new grid. Exactly where they are placed has an important new meaning. A “post-it” placed in the extreme top-left corner of this grid (i.e. “post-it” number 1 in the example) can be interpreted as being a weakness that is very important, but is also easy to solve. “Post-it” number 2 in the example shows a weakness that is just as important, but is considered slightly more difficult to address. The weakness depicted by “post-it” number 3 in the example is “very important, but also very difficult (perhaps impossible) to address”.

The vertical dotted line, for practical purposes, can divide the grid into “weaknesses within the power of the project/management to address” (on the left of the line) and “weaknesses outside of the power of the project/management to address” (on the right hand side of the line).

“Post-it” number 4, in the example, is of “fairly high importance”, but participants are not sure whether it is inside or outside the power of the project/management to do something about it. Therefore, they have placed the “post-it” over the vertical dividing line.

The purpose of a SWOT Analysis is to help us to analyse (evaluate) a situation, and then identify an action plan to do something to improve it.

One of the reasons Stage 3 of the SWOT Analysis so useful is that it helps us to identify a “way forward”.

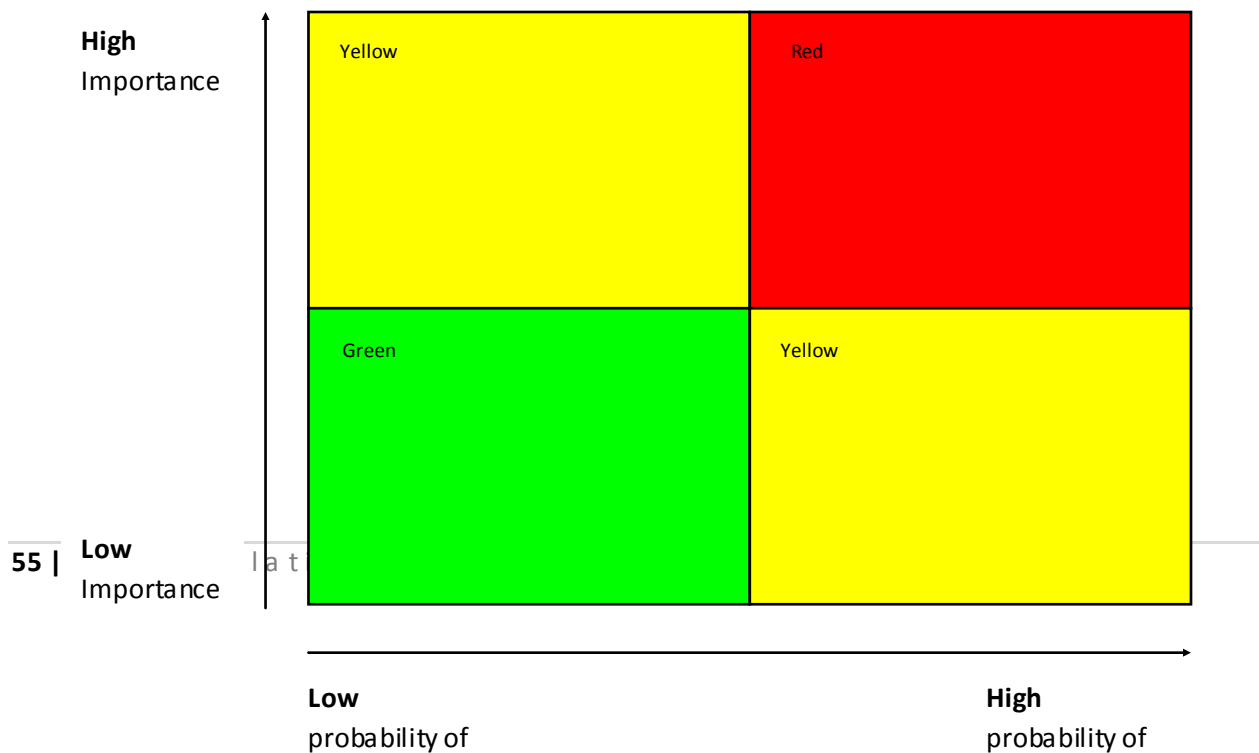
It is often good to develop an action plan by focussing on the “top-left-hand corner” of the second grid: in other words with weaknesses that are very important, but are not too difficult to address. By doing this, we are starting with, and agreeing upon, things we believe can be done! We are identifying a “way forward”. We are not getting bogged down with problems that are too difficult.

If wished, Stage 3 of the SWOT Analysis can also be used for further analysis of “strengths”, “opportunities” and “threats”. For example, this would allow us to identify the “most important and practical strengths” that we can draw upon in mapping a way forward.

To bring us closer to developing an action plan, SWOT Analysis Stage 4 is a very simple, but very important, stage. It involves taking a “weakness statement” (a negative statement) and reformulating it as an “objective statement” (a positive statement). Use this process to reformulate the weaknesses that you believe it is within the power of the project/management to address.

You now have the basis for an action plan! If there are too many objectives to address, select the ones with the greatest importance! Another Grid is required, as shown below: Grid 3.

GRID 3



The grid has been colour coded (like traffic lights). For “threats” in the green area of the grid, “go ahead”: the threats can be ignored. They are not important enough to worry about.

For threats in the two yellow areas of the grid: “proceed with caution”. These threats are important enough to demand further attention. Monitor or manage these threats and, if possible, adjust activities and objectives to remove the threats or reduce the risks associated with them.

Threats that fall in the red area of the grid are known as “killer threats”. You may need to “Stop!” and think again. Consider redesigning your action plan to remove the threat or substantially reduce its importance or probability of causing failure.

There is an underlying “logic” to the four squares of the “SWOT” grid, which can be summarised as follows:

- The “weaknesses” identified help us to develop possible activities and strategies suitable for a project or action plan.
- We should then try to consider how we can **build** on the “strengths” and “opportunities” we have identified to increase our chances of success.
- We also need to take important note of the “threats” we have identified. We need to consider how we might be able to design activities to avoid these threats or minimise the risks associated with them. Another strategy might be to design activities that address these threats directly: to remove or limit them.

What remains, therefore, is for us to go back to the “strengths” and “opportunities” we have identified, and see if we can come up with practical suggestions for building on these.

SWOT Analysis Template

From: <http://www.businessballs.com/swotanalysisfreetemplate.htm>

Subject of SWOT analysis: (define the subject of the analysis here)	
<p>strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages of proposition? • Capabilities? • Competitive advantages? • USP's (unique selling points)? • Resources, Assets, People? • Experience, know ledge, data? • Financial reserves, likely returns? • Marketing - reach, distribution, awareness? • Innovative aspects? • Location and geographical? • Price, value, quality? • Accr_ations, qualifications, certifications? • Processes, systems, IT, communications? • Cultural, attitudinal, behavioural? • Management cover, succession? 	<p>weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantages of proposition? • Gaps in capabilities? • Lack of competitive strength? • Reputation, presence and reach? • Financials? • Own known vulnerabilities? • Timescales, deadlines and pressures? • Cashflow , start-up cash-drain? • Continuity, supply chain robustness? • Effects on core activities, distraction? • Reliability of data, plan predictability? • Morale, commitment, leadership? • Accr_ations, etc? • Processes and systems, etc? • Management cover, succession?
<p>opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market developments? • Competitors' vulnerabilities? • Industry or lifestyle trends? • Technology development and innovation? • Global influences? • New markets, vertical, horizontal? • Niche target markets? • Geographical, export, import? • New USP's? • Tactics - surprise, major contracts, etc? • Business and product development? • Information and research? • Partnerships, agencies, distribution? • Volumes, production, economies? • Seasonal, w eather, fashion influences? 	<p>threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political effects? • Legislative effects? • Environmental effects? • IT developments? • Competitor intentions - various? • Market demand? • New technologies, services, ideas? • Vital contracts and partners? • Sustaining internal capabilities? • Obstacles faced? • Insurmountable w eaknesses? • Loss of key staff? • Sustainable financial backing? • Economy - home, abroad? • Seasonality, w eather effects?

SWOT Analysis

Dr. L M Foong- PhD

<http://article.tqmcasestudies.com/swot-analysis-graphic.html>

When conducted properly is an excellent process that provide a holistic overview of business challenges . It entails data collection and analysis for external factors such as environment, assumptions, scenarios, risk factors as well as internal factors such as own and competitor capabilities etc. SWOT Analysis is commonly incorporated in a Strategic Planning Process. This article illustrates how you can use it in the business world.

Figure 1 - SWOT Analysis empty template

<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>

Figure 2 - SWOT Analysis with sample of the data

<u>Strength</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High quality product• strong financial support• Research skill• Good internet know ledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long customer enquiry respond time• High production cost• programming is not updated• too many things to focus• cannot cope w ith technology changes

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open up new market in Middle East • Economy boom in the ASEAN countries • Forex is gaining ground • Smaller organization is winding down • Government policy strengthen for export <p>Internet Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More educated surfers • Big population involved • Malaysian population is catching up • Vast internet knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy export from China • Eroding price in all market segment • Consumer choice limited • Forex threats <p>Internet Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ever changing technology • google may band listing • payment gateway disappeared

What is SWOT Analysis?

It is an abbreviation for **S**trengths-**W**eaknesses-**O**pportunities-**T**hreats, sometime I call it the four factors. It is a process involving collection of data pertaining to these four factors, analyze those data to formulate actions or strategies. Depending on the objective of performing a SWOT Analysis, it can be used achieve a strategic action, or to formulate strategies. For many organizations, it is a tool widely used as an integral part of their Strategic Planning Process. There are organization performed SWOT Analysis for a department to determine its internal capabilities.

Strengths: the first Character of **S**WOT

As mentioned earlier, this is an internal factor which deals with the strengths within its own business, operation, production floor or department. It is internal because it takes into considerations the level of capabilities in handling an identified issue. All if not most of the time, these issues are well within their circle of influence. However, it is not good enough for you to identify and recognize factors as strengths unless it is compared with some benchmark. In most case, you would compare your “strengths” with competitors especially those who are better than your own organization.

Why bother to compare with your competitors? You may be wondering! Is it not good enough because if your team members recognize their own strengths without comparing with a reference point, then the strengths has not competitive advantages, make sense?

Assuming making a comparison with a benchmark has its own merit, what should be used a reference point? Well, I normally pick two references, namely:

- 1) The competitors

Not any competitor but I would pick one that is ahead of my organization. The reason is that I have to either maintain my competitive position or to catch up with the competitor.

2) The world class organization

I would at the same time, pick a world class company as a benchmark for future business or operation excellence. I do that because I aimed to stay ahead of competition with world class practices (selectively) in the long run.

There are many factors in an operation that can be considered as strength. It is normally highlighted during brainstorming among management members. When the list of factors for Strength is too many, it should be prioritized using TQM tools. I normally use a simple ranking system compare my own with that of the competitor. I found that this method is more reflective to indicate its implication to the business if it is not taken care.

Weaknesses: the second character of **SWOT**

Similar to the above, it is an internal factor that deals with the weaknesses of owned business, operation, production floor or department. It is internal because it takes into considerations the level of capabilities in handling an identified issue. In many occasions, these weaknesses are well within your circle of influence. You may argue that the weaknesses have no impact to the business bottom line. Well, I can agree with you in this aspect not that I accept that weaknesses but I recognize the fact that there maybe other more critical issues to tackle.

As such, after a list of weaknesses is generated, I would make a comparison with competitor better than me as well as competitor who are catching up on me. Then again, the list may be too many to deal with. So, when it is too many, you should prioritize them with an appropriate TQM tools. I normally use a simple ranking system compare my own with that of the competitor. I found that this method is more reflective to indicate its implication to the business if it is not taken care.

Opportunities: the third character of **S.W.O.T.**

This is an important factor to identify opportunity as a result of external influence. It often leads to more business or investment as well as opportunity for innovation of products and services. Due to the fact it is external, many assumptions is used. However, given the constraints, you should try to quantify the assumptions so that the conclusion of this factor is real. In real life application, there are cases where opportunities derived from operation are classified in into this Opportunity factor. But rightfully, it should be classified under the Strength factor.

Let me illustrate what I meant...

A production floor has excess capacity by about 20 percent. It is quite frequent that team will translate this as an opportunity by stating "we have the opportunity to take on more sales due to our excess capacity"

Let's think about it for a moment: Excess capacity is a fact! Whereas there is no information stating a potential for sales growth. This statement is merely a statement of opportunity NOT a fact (or news). Therefore, this should not be taken as an opportunity in this context. However, in general terms, the excess capacity would provide an opportunity to increase sales. But bear in mind, there is no indication of growing sales.

On the other hand, the excess capacity of 20 percent is real. Hence, should be taken as something factual for the capacity of the production. Then it can be classified as the STRENGTH

Threats; the fourth character of **S.W.O.T.**

This is another important and critical factor to deal with. It has great influence to the success or failure of an organization if not dealt with appropriately. This section looks for factors that can put an organization in a loss-loss situation where example may either reduce the market share or its profitability. Once again, since it is an external factor, its reality is assumed. However, in many cases, they can be verified by announcement, publications etc. On the other hand, if organizations act on these factors, it may not always mitigate the threat because the threat is not real.

Threats is something that most of us do not like to see in business however, it cannot be avoided. When this is happened, you need to realize it make an evaluation of its impact to the business. However, there are cases when leaders of an organization do not interpret certain factor as threats.

SMART/ER GOALS

Writing SMARTer Objectives

Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-based, Exciting, Recorded... or is it?

<http://www.rapidbi.com/created/WriteSMARTObjectives.html>

Introduction to SMART objectives and SMART Goals

Management by Objectives is often credited to Peter Drucker in his 1954 book "The Practice of Management", from this claimed history and approach the use of the acronym **SMARTer** has grown. Having said that, for those that have bothered to read the book - there is NO DIRECT reference to **SMART** by Drucker in this publication. While it is clear that Drucker was the first to write about management by objectives, the **SMART** acronym is harder to trace the documented origins of.

The use of the approach to managing known as "Management By Objectives" or MBO, has reduced in recent years, however increasingly, many organizations are using the SMART and SMARTER acronym within goal setting and performance appraisal or management environments. The use of SMART objective formatting is not limited to business and performance management, indeed [SMART](#) possibly started in the world of personal development.

This page has been written to provide not only an overview of the SMART objective format, but to help you the manager or developer to write your own.

SMARTer is an acronym to help in the writing of objectives. the objectives can be for managing performance or for developmental purposes.

There are a variety of types of objectives that can be written, all can be done in the SMARTer format.

- **Process objectives**
 - lets you know what you are doing and how you will do it; describes participants, interactions and activities
- **Impact objectives**
 - lets you know what the long term implications of your program[me]/ activity will be; describes the longer term impact on your target audience or organization
- **Outcome objectives**

- lets you know how you will change attitudes, knowledge or behavior (short term); describe the degree to which you expect this change

- Personal objectives**

- personal development is an ideal application for SMARTer objectives. Often we see SMARTer objectives written for project management or business and performance management, however as individuals in our [personal development plans](#), SMARTer objectives are also a valuable formula within which to set and individual measure performance.

Language in objectives

Objectives are active using strong [verbs](#). Action [verbs](#) are observable and better communicate the intent of what is to be attempted, like plan, write, conduct, produce, apply, to recite, to revise, to contrast, to install, to select, to assemble, to compare, to investigate, and to develop. etc.

Avoid generalities in objective statements and infinitives to avoid include to know, to understand, to enjoy, and to believe. rather than learn, understand, feel. The words need to be not only active but measurable.

A **goal** can be defined as "*The purpose toward which an endeavor is directed; an objective*" In personal and organizational development terms, the goal is set as the main single aim and objectives are the elements which together achieve the goal. goal may only have one objective.

SMART acronym variations - SMARTer

There are many variations on the theme including:

	Variations of words commonly used in SMART as an acronym		
S	Specific	Stimulating	Simple Stretching Succinct Straight forward Self owned Self managed Self controlled Significant Strategic Sensible
M	Measurable	Motivating	Manageable Meaningful Magical

			Magnetic Maintainable Mapped to goals
A	Achievable	Appropriate	Actionable Attainable Ambitious Aspirational Accepted/ acceptable Aligned Accountable Agreed Adapted Assignable As- f -now Adjustable Adaptable
R	Realistic	Relevant	Results Orientated Resources are adequate Resourced Rewarding Recorded Reviewable Robust Relevant to a mission
T	Time-.. bound limited driven constrained related phased sensitive specific stamped lined	Tangible- ©	Trackable Traceable Timed/ Timely Toward what you want

Some versions of the acronym add the letters – ER making **SMARTer** objectives

E	Extending/Environmental*	Exciting	Evaluated

			Engaging Energising Ethical Enjoyable
R	Review ed/Resourced	Rew arding	Recorded Realistic Relevant Resourced Research Based

One of the key advantages in using SMARTER in the agreeing and setting of personal development goals, it it helps to recognize the importance of the engagement of the individual. The more motivated they are by the development objective the better they appears to perform, often putting extra time into self development activity.

GANTT CHART

<http://www.ganttchart.com/>

A Gantt chart is a graphical representation of the duration of tasks against the progression of time.

Use a Gantt chart to plan how long a project should take.

A Gantt chart lays out the order in which the tasks need to be carried out.

Early Gantt charts did not show dependencies between tasks but modern Gantt chart software provides this capability.

A Gantt chart lets you see immediately what should have been achieved at any point in time.

A Gantt chart lets you see how remedial action may bring the project back on course.

Most Gantt charts include "milestones" which are technically not available on Gantt charts. However, for representing deadlines and other significant events, it is very useful to include this feature on a Gantt chart.

Gantt Chart Terminology

Term	Meaning
Budget	A fiscal plan of operations for a given time period.
Baseline	The project's original plan. Usually, the project's first set of start and finish dates.
Earned Value (EV)	Earned value is synonymous with the term BCWP (Budget Cost for Work Performed). The actual measured performance; the value of the completed work.
Gantt Chart	A common way of showing tasks over time. Gantt chart EXAMPLES

Level of Effort (LOE)

Work which doesn't yield a final product. Examples: coordination, follow-up and other support activities.

Milestone

An important event.

Time Now

A vertical line showing the date on which the status of the project was last done. Often this date is the same as the current date.

or Current Date Line

If a task is on schedule, it will usually be shaded up to the time now line. If it is ahead of schedule it will be shaded beyond the time now line. If it is behind schedule the shading will not reach the time now line.

Project Management Institute (PMI)

A non-profit group dedicated to improving project management, providing education and certification to project managers and more. (www.pmi.org)

PERT

Program Evaluation Review Technique, a project management method developed by the United States Navy.

Task List

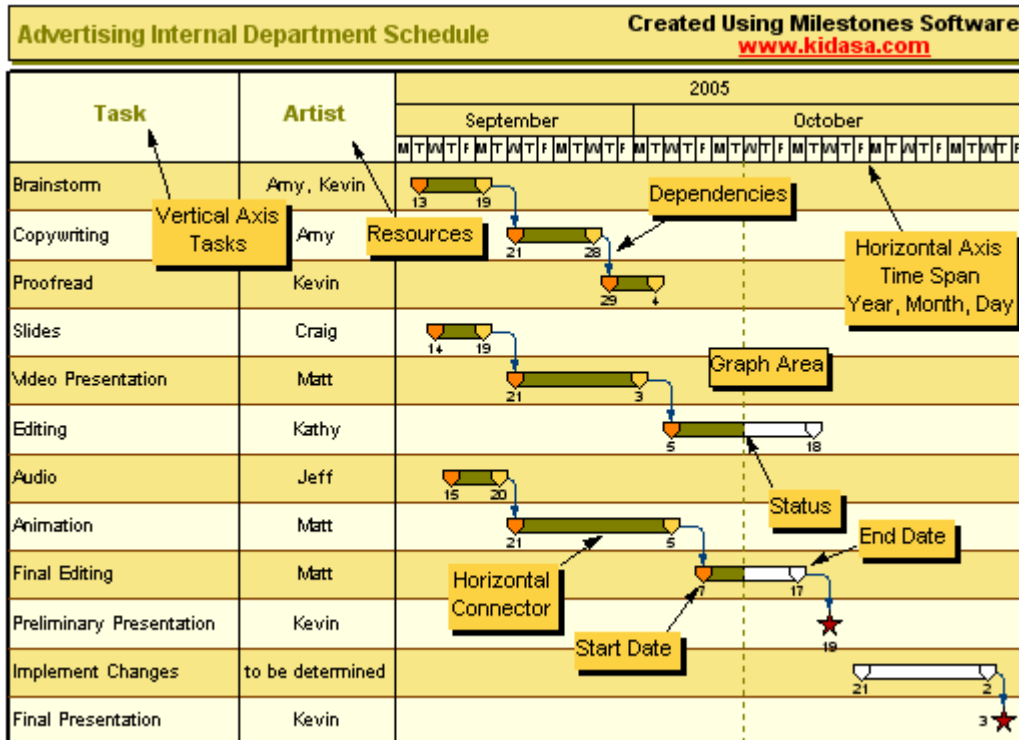
The list of steps in a project.

Statement of Work (SOW)

A document describing the work to be done on the contract.

Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

A tree-like representation of the work to be done on a project. The WBS graphically shows the division of work.



A Gantt chart is a matrix.

The Gantt chart is constructed with a horizontal axis representing the total time span of the project, broken down into increments (days, weeks, or months).

The Gantt chart is constructed with a vertical axis representing the tasks that make up the project.

The Gantt chart is constructed with a graph area which contains horizontal bars for each task connecting the period start and period ending symbols.

The Gantt chart has variants.

Milestones: important checkpoints or interim goals for a project.

Resources: for team projects, it often helps to have an additional column containing numbers or initials which identify who on the team is responsible for the task.

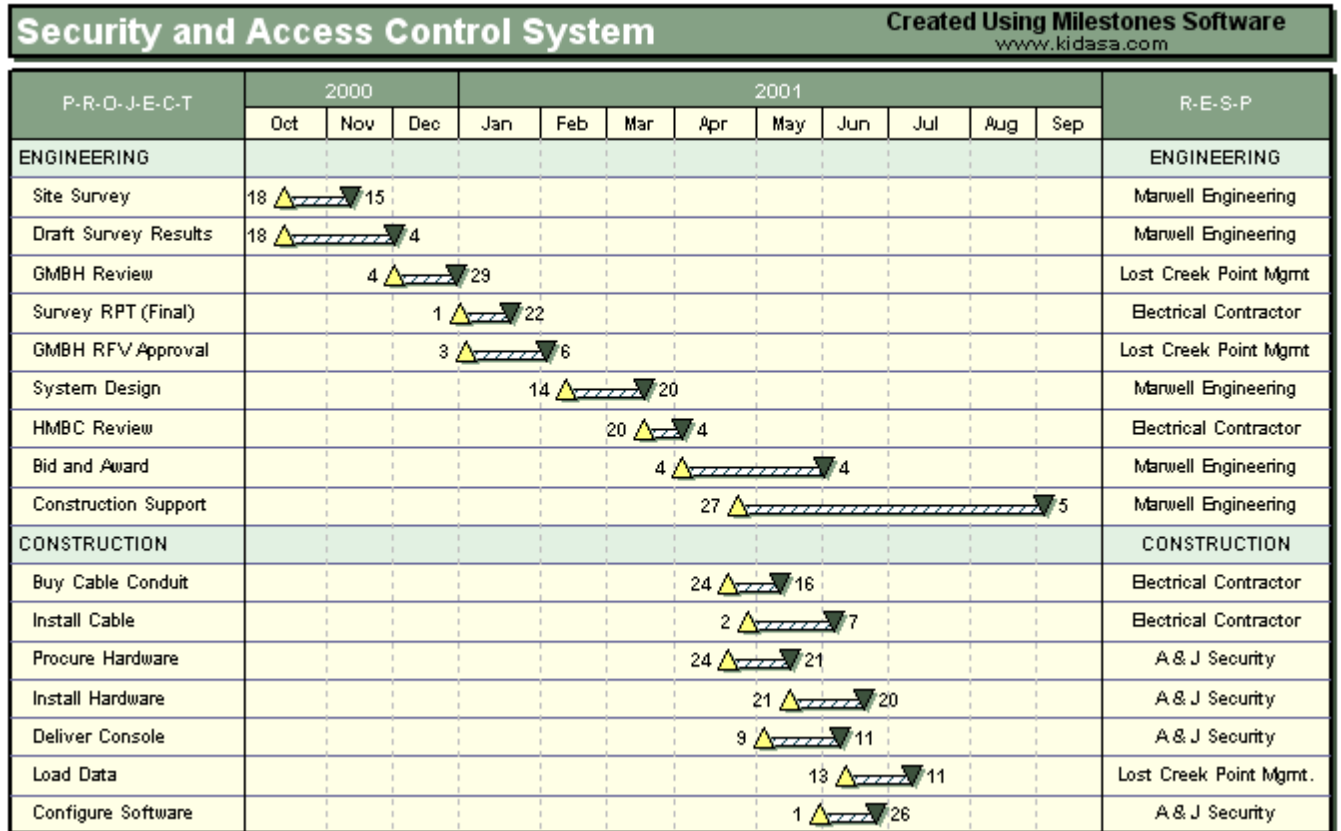
Status: the projects progress, the chart is updated by filling in the task's bar to a length proportional to the amount of work that has been finished.

Dependencies: an essential concept that some activities are dependent on other activities being completed first.

SAMPLE GANTT CHARTS

Basic Gantt Chart

<http://www.ganttchart.com/BasicGanttExample.html>



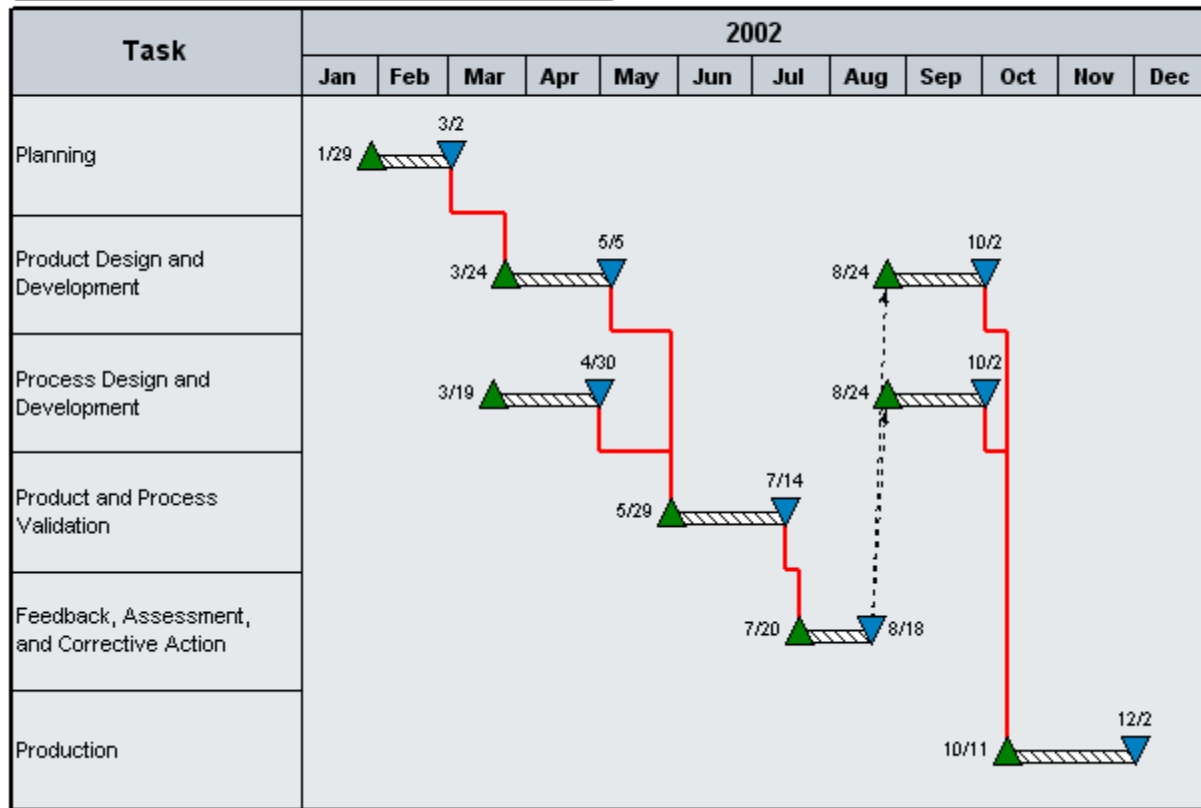
GANTT WITH DEPENDENCIES EXAMPLE

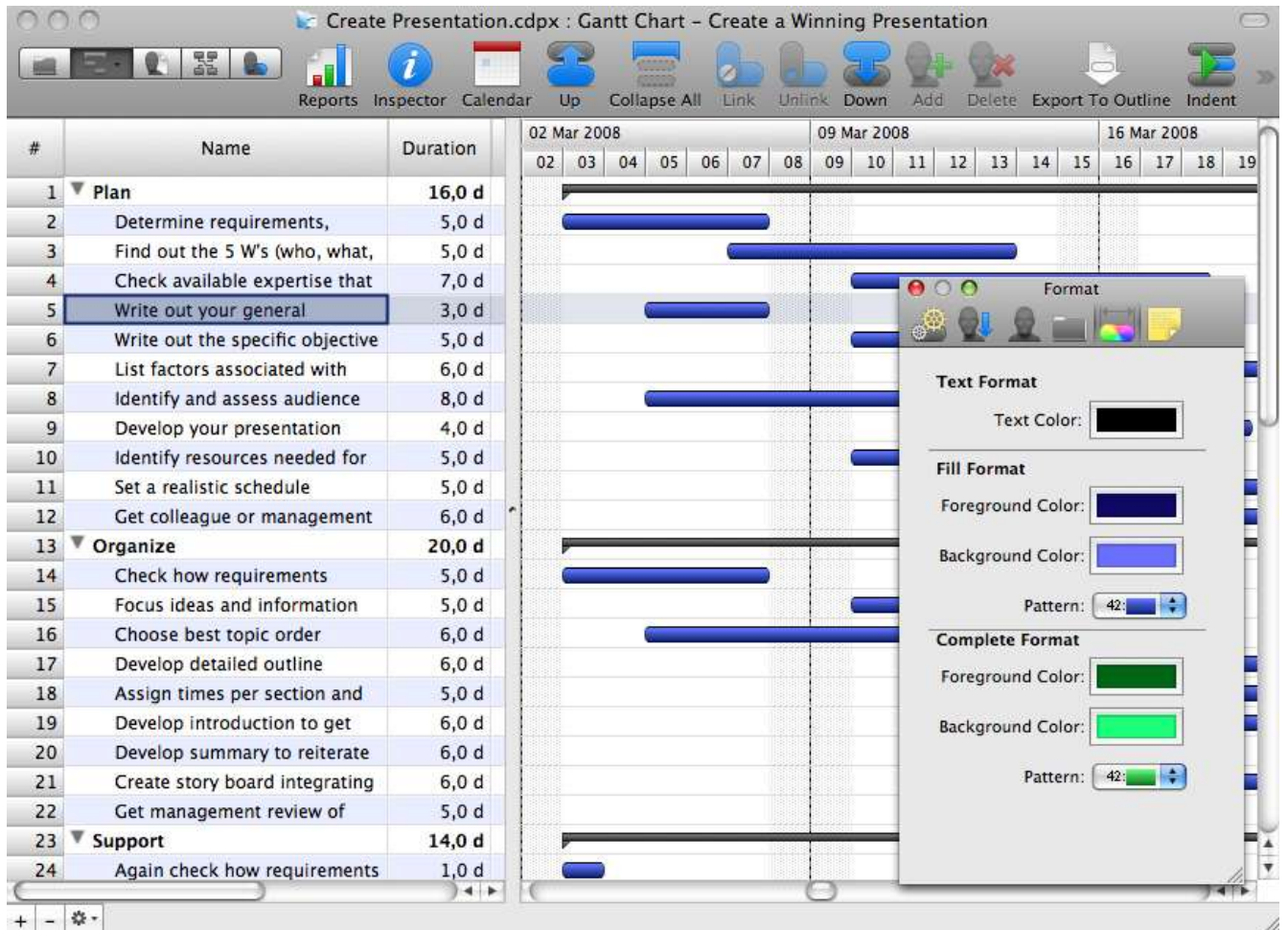
<http://www.ganttchart.com/GanttwithDependenciesExample.html>

Product Development Schedule Phase One

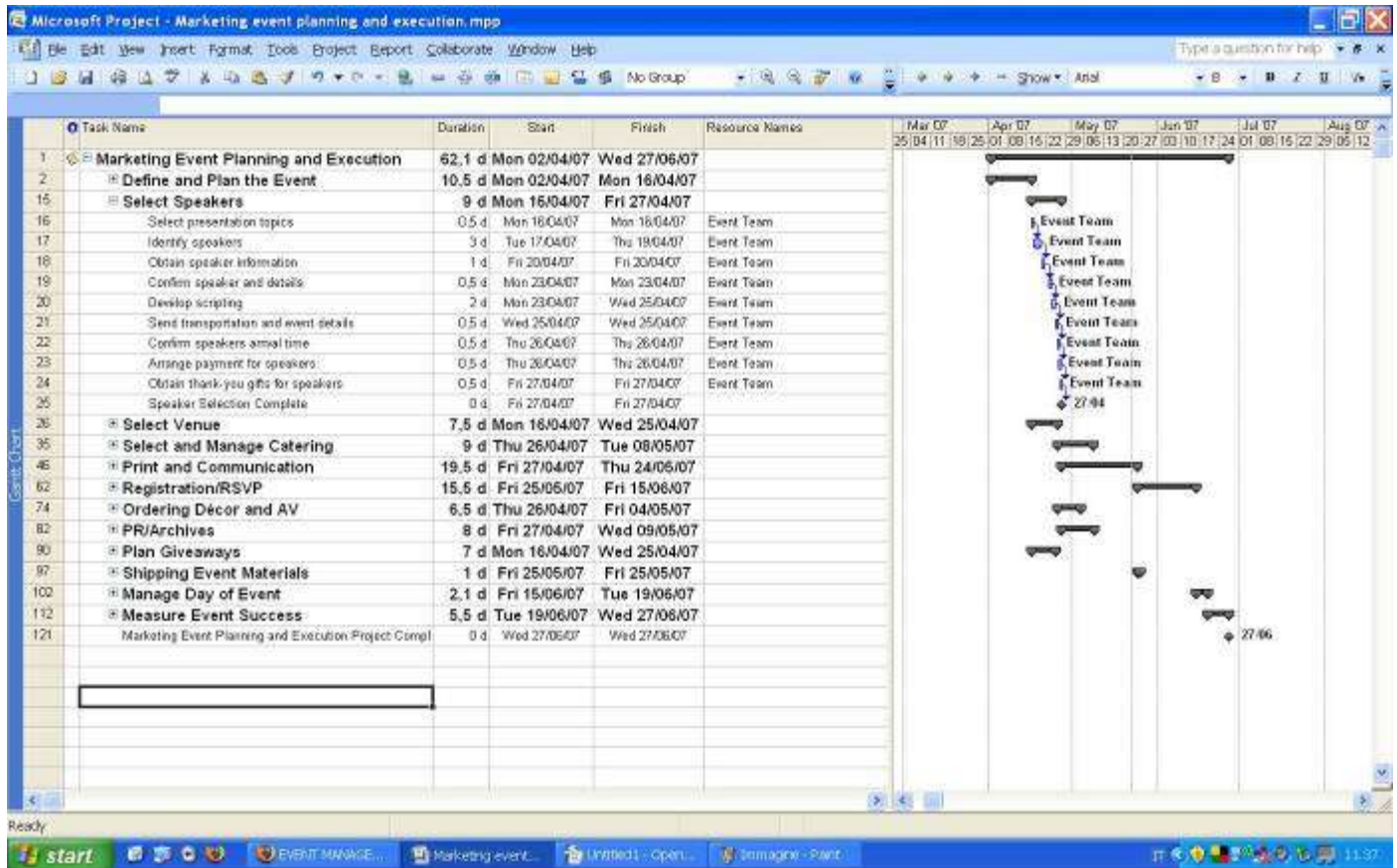
Created Using Milestones Software

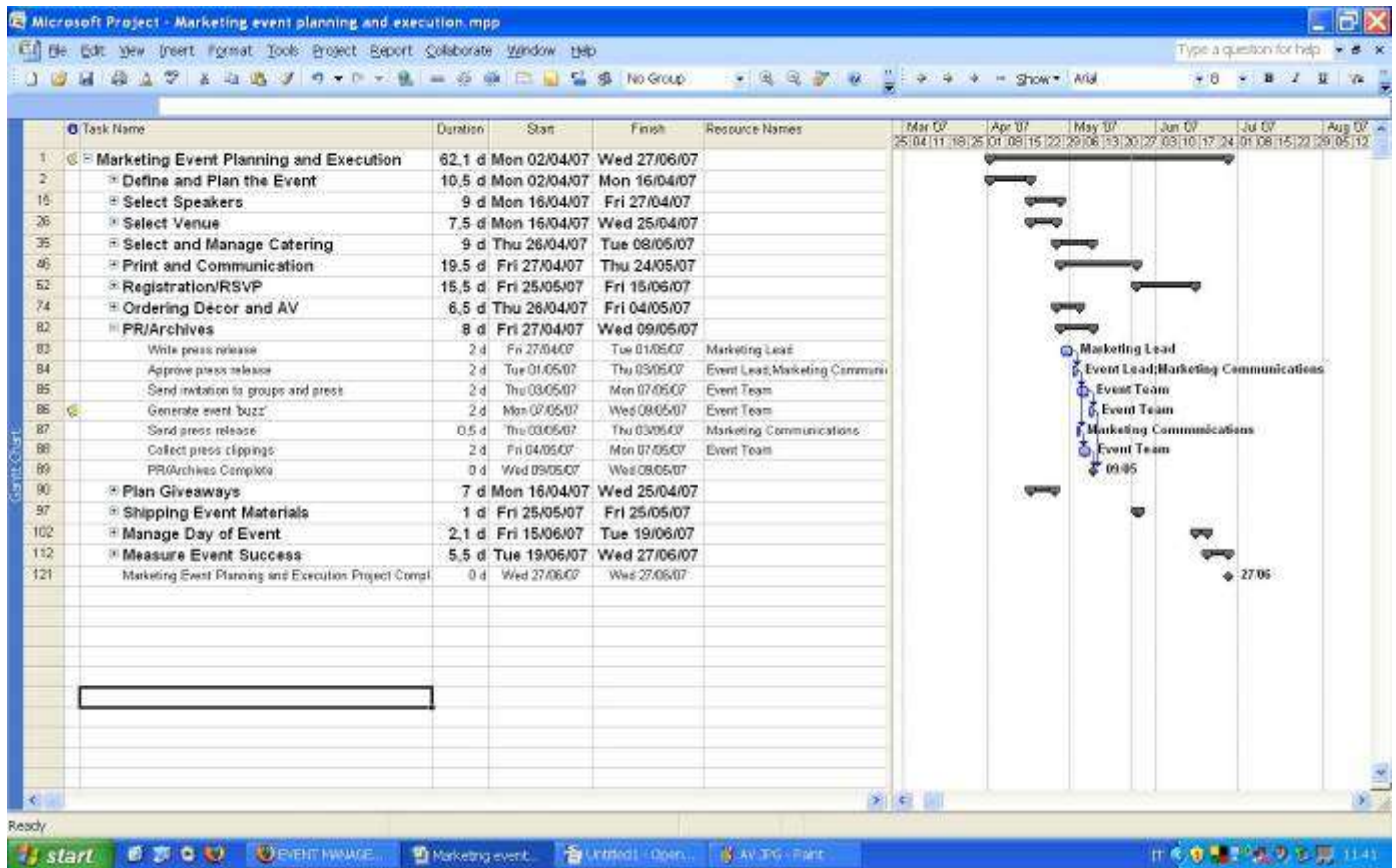
www.kidasa.com

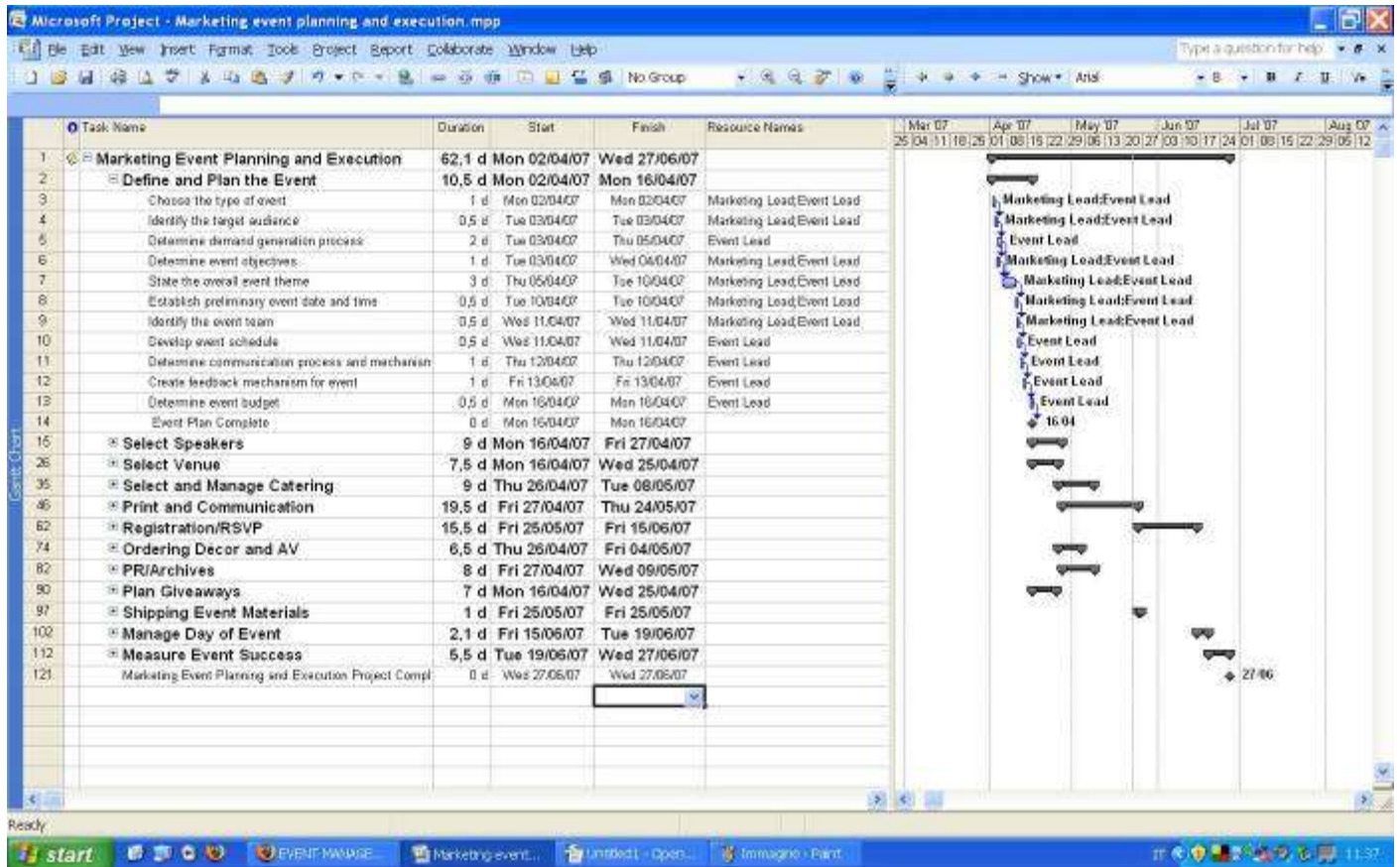




More Gantt charts are available from the source: <http://www.eventmanagerblog.com>







MESSAGING

*For use of PEST, SWOT, and SMART/ER to define messaging and messages, refer to the Course Overview, your study notes and the PowerPoint Presentation. The following is addition to the skills acquired while working on the previous themes.

Unique perceived benefit (UPB)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Unique Perceived Benefit or **UPB** is essentially a customer-orientated product offer. [Unique Selling Proposition](#) (USP) is largely formulated from the seller's perspective. USP stems from product features. Instead of looking at the product from the seller's view point, Unique Perceived Benefit (UPB) looks at the need from the customer's view point.

A UPB-based product offers the prospect's situation and motives much better than any list of arbitrary USPs.

Unique selling proposition (USP)

The **Unique Selling Proposition** (also **Unique Selling Point**) is a [marketing](#) concept that was first proposed as a theory to explain a pattern among successful advertising campaigns of the early 1940s. It states that such campaigns made unique propositions to the customer and that this convinced them to switch brands. The term was invented by [Rosser Reeves](#) of Ted Bates & Company. Today the term is used in other fields or just casually to refer to any aspect of an object that differentiates it from similar objects.

Today, a number of businesses and corporations currently use USPs as a basis for their marketing campaigns

Definition

In Reality in Advertising ([Reeves 1961](#), pp. 46–48) Reeves laments that the U.S.P. is widely misunderstood and gives a precise definition in three parts:

1. Each advertisement must make a proposition to the consumer. Not just words, not just product [puffery](#), not just show-window advertising. Each advertisement must say to each reader: "Buy this product, and you will get *this specific benefit*."
2. The proposition must be one that the competition either cannot, or does not, offer. It must be unique—either a uniqueness of the brand or a claim not otherwise made in that particular field of advertising.

3. The proposition must be so strong that it can move the mass millions, i.e., pull over new customers to your product.

[_]Examples

Some good current examples of products with a clear USP are:

- [Head & Shoulders](#): "You get rid of dandruff"
- [Olay](#): "You get younger-looking skin"

Some unique propositions that were pioneers when they were introduced:

- [Domino's Pizza](#): "You get fresh, hot pizza delivered to your door in 30 minutes or less -- or it's free."
- [FedEx](#): "When your package absolutely, positively has to get there overnight"
- [M&M's](#): "The milk chocolate melts in your mouth, not in your hand"
- [Wonder Bread](#): "Wonder Bread Helps Build Strong Bodies 12 Ways"

[_]References

[Reeves, Rosser](#) (1961), *Reality in Advertising*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, LCCN 61007118

How to Make Your Messages Memorable

Effective Communication

From [Isabelle Albanese](#), for About.com

What makes a memorable TV commercial, product design, or marketing campaign? Why do you listen to certain politicians or business leaders, and glaze over at the very mention of others? Why is it that you dread opening certain senders' emails, but open others as soon as they land in your inbox?

It's all about messaging. When a piece of communication is to the point, relevant, worthwhile, and compelling, it moves you — the listener or reader — to action.

Moving people is not magic — it's all about effective communication. Anyone can achieve effective communication by using a simple tool that has an uncanny ability to pinpoint why any message works or doesn't work, and how to improve it. It's called the 4Cs Model, which stands for Comprehension, Connection, Credibility, and Contagiousness.

The 4Cs Model was originally developed as an assessment tool for evaluating the impact of advertising and marketing materials. Brands such as Dunkin' Donuts, Suave Shampoo, and Breyers Ice Cream used the 4Cs Model to develop marketing campaigns that really spoke to people and built an emotional connection with their consumers.

The good news is that you don't have to be an expert writer or advertising genius to accomplish messaging mastery. The beauty of the 4Cs Model is that it's easy to understand and simple to apply to every piece of communication you produce at work whether it's a résumé, an email, newsletter article, marketing piece, PowerPoint, or blog.

When you use get into the habit of applying the 4Cs to every type of communication you generate, managers, coworkers, clients, and customers will take notice.

The 4Cs Model of Effective Communication At-a-Glance

The 4Cs model is a useful tool for objectively evaluating the effectiveness of many forms of communication: what's working, what isn't working, and why. The 4Cs can assess marketing communication, as well as business communication, political communication, entertainment, and plain old everyday person-to-person communication, from email and blogging to relationship talk.

The First C: Comprehension

Does the audience get the message, the main idea, the point? What does the message instantly communicate? Can the audience play the message back? This confirms that they "get it" and the first C is working. Here are three tips for better comprehension:

- Make the message clear and sharp.
- Repetition helps. Tell them what you're going to tell them; next, tell them; and then tell them what you told them.
- Keep it simple - don't go too deep.

The Second C: Connection

Making a connection with a communicated idea or message means not only that the audience "gets it," but that it resonates with them, has meaning and significance for them, and usually triggers an irrational or emotional response: frustration, excitement, anger, passion, joy, happiness, sadness, and so on. When connection is there, it will spark new behaviors and actions.

The Third C: Credibility

The audience needs to believe *who* is saying it (the brand or messenger's voice), *what* is being said, and *how* it is being said. Otherwise, any connection begins to break down - immediately. Credibility is the critical C, because the audience may completely understand a communicator's message, and even connect with it on an emotional level, then promptly turn around and say that coming from this particular source: company, political candidate, supervisor, whatever, they aren't buying it.

The Fourth C: Contagiousness

In communications, contagiousness is a good thing. You want your audience to "catch the message," run with it, and spread it around. Think of the last time you saw a TV ad that was so funny or clever that you discussed it with your friends, found yourself reenacting it, or repeated the slogan or catch phrase in conversations. That's contagiousness. To be contagious, a message has to be energetic, new, different, and memorable. It should also evoke a vivid emotional response, have "talk" potential, motivate the target to do something, and elicit a demonstrable reaction.

Put the 4Cs in Action for Effective Communication

Practice 4C-ing for effective communication and it will become second nature to you. Try this experiment. Apply the 4Cs to a commercial or a news story you see or hear today on TV or

radio. Did you instantly get it? Did it evoke an emotional response? Was it or the messenger believable? Did you feel like the message “stuck” and made you want to react in some way? Or try 4Cing some of the emails you receive today. You’ll quickly see why messages work and don’t work. Seeing communications through a 4Cs lens will make you more aware of your own communication and messaging challenges.

Once you start “4C-ing” messages, both yours and those of other people, looking through the effective communications lens of comprehension, connection, credibility, and contagiousness, will become a habit. You’ll become adept at reading something as simple as a memo and understanding why it got you so riled up and eager to take action, or why you quickly tossed it into the “circular file.” The more you think about and apply the 4Cs to your *own* messages, the more effective you’ll become at everything you do.

SPEECH

Barbara Rocha's Speech Advice

<http://www.barbararocha.com/resources/advice.htm>

It's Not About You

- [#1 Way to Fail](#)
- [1 on 1 Interview](#)

Making Yourself Clear:

Effective Presentation Skills Articles

- [Choose to Communicate Clearly](#)
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Not CONNECTING: THE NUMBER ONE WAY TO FAIL WHEN MAKING SPEECH

Someone asked me recently, "What's the worst mistake speaker's make?" My answer: The worst mistake is looking at the audience from the wrong perspective.

For some people, looking at the audience from the wrong perspective means not realizing that the audience wants them to succeed-they really do. At the very least they want you to succeed because otherwise it makes them uncomfortable and wastes their time.

For some people, the responsibility is so heavy that they focus totally on themselves from start to finish. So in their organizing, they never think of the audience, they just include everything they know-a surefire snoozer. Always ask yourself, "What would I want to know if I were in this audience?" And ask members of your expected audience what they would like to know.

Then there's a much smaller group of speakers who also focus on themselves from start to finish, not so much from the responsibility, but more because of the chance to showcase themselves. They enjoy being in front of a group so much that the same thing happens to them:

they never think of the audience's needs, and don't prepare their ideas with the purpose of helping the audience.

What all these finally add up to is that your material doesn't connect with the audience, and, worst of all, neither do you. It's hard to sell your point when your material is boring, and it's even harder when you are. If you don't seem real, even good material is suspect.

You can avoid making that worst of all mistakes by making your number one priority to connect with your audience.

1 on 1 Interview

Focus on the job interview

Help the interviewer make the right choice. (You may not be it)

If you're looking for a way to project more confidence and poise in your next job interview, consider making a shift in your focus. Examine the full meaning of the phrase "Help Wanted", and ask yourself is this interview really about me? Chances are it's not.

The company has a problem. Something isn't getting done because they've lost employees for whatever reason, or because they have more work than they can handle with their present employees.

If they hire the right person, life will be good. The job function getting done without demanding too much of their time and attention. The department will run better. They can get on with making the company successful.

If they hire the wrong person, somebody is going to have to deal with that instead of doing more productive work. It will mean extra training, extra meetings, repairing the damage, correcting mistakes, resolving conflicts. And, probably, there will be the added inconvenience of documenting the problems that justified letting the person go.

The final blow: going through the hiring process all over again. It's expensive, time consuming, and frustrating to hire the wrong person.

Be aware: The interviewer may have more to lose than you do.

The interviewer, of course, is aware of the problems caused by hiring the wrong person, and therefore be feeling serious pressure. If you're the interviewer and you recommend hiring someone who turns out to be the wrong person for the job, you don't look so good.

In addition, some interviewers haven't much training in interviewing. The job got passed off to them by someone else who didn't have the time, or didn't want to have the time. At the age of 18, my daughter was given the job of

interviewing for a large software company. Fortunately, for them, she was good at it, but she developed her own criteria and made up her own rules. Your interviewer may not be good at making up guidelines for interviewing. And may not have much confidence in those guidelines.

Because of the pressure and the lack of training, the interviewer may be as ill-at-ease interviewing as you are about being interviewed.

Be ready to walk. You don't need this job. You need to a place you can contribute your skills and abilities where they appreciate and pay you. Getting a job is about solving two problems: the company's and yours. If it's not a good fit, you'll wish you hadn't gotten the job, and so will they.

Interviews are a two-way street for the purpose of discovering if you belong together. It's not about your being judged. You need to ask questions as well as answer them to find out if this is a good place for you to work. (This would not be, "When do I get my first vacation," and "Where is the water cooler?" Rather, "What opportunities are there for learning about other parts of the company?" "Are employees encouraged to continue their education?" "Does the company offer training programs?" "What is the rate of employee turnover?" "Is the company considering any new product lines?" "How are they dealing with the Y2K questions?") Do your ethics, work styles, attitudes and goals match?

You and the interviewer are peers. If you feel desperate to get this job, you'll look and sound like it. You won't be thinking clearly and you'll come across poorly. You need your wits about you so you can help the interviewer determine if you're the person who will solve the company's hiring problem and also make the interviewer look good.

If either of you is focuses on yourself, you're not participating productively in the interview.

Help create a positive outcome by concentrating on helping the interviewer look good by hiring the right person. That is, formulate your answers based on how your skills help the company and the interviewer solve their problem and make the right hiring choice.

Don't wing it.

Find out about the company before going to the interview: go to the reference section of the library, check out the company's website, talk to someone who works there, check newspaper archives for past articles. How big is the company, how many locations, how many employees, the name of the president, their ranking in their industry. Find out their history, how long they've been in business, if they've been in other businesses in the past.

The more you know about the job and about the company, the easier it is for you to concentrate on shaping your answers to make it clear how you can help

them.

This isn't about your impressing them. It's not about your getting a job. It's about looking for a match. It's the wedding of two equals. You don't want to take a job where you'll be miserable. And you don't want to take one that results in getting fired.

Choose to Communicate Clearly

by Barbara Rocha

"WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS A FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE."

Downsizing, rightsizing, reorganizing, restructuring, or reengineering. Call it what you want, almost everyone's affected (or is it infected?).

A "failure to communicate" may not be the reason changes are needed, but failing to communicate can make sure any changes fail.

Try using the Golden Rule. We want to know what's happening; so do they.

We're dealing with trust here. And the KISS principle. And openness. And a lot less CYA than usual. Trust me. Tell me what's happening. Let me participate (this is no place for control freaks.)

The control-the power-you get to have is choosing to communicate clearly with everyone involved. It's tough, but surviving means adapting.

Consider the similarities between communicating within the company during restructuring and communicating with the public during a major product failure: Be open. Be honest. Respect the intelligence of your audience. Think of the situation from their point of view. Communicate early and often. Don't wait until the damage is so great that it's too late to fix it.

No one wants to lose control; everyone's uncertain about what's coming.

Anyone who stops thinking about self and focuses on the issue and what's best for everyone, communicates honestly and sincerely. And the people who hear that kind of communication will probably believe what they hear—at least once they get used to being told the truth.

Yes, it's scary. And the stakes are high. It's the perfect moment to conquer ego-based decisions and really communicate.

Be Human Not Perfect

By Barbara Rocha

THE PITFALLS OF PERFECTION

Think back on times you were a victim of boredom and detachment listening to a speech. Those speakers might have been very good technically, but just didn't connect with the audience or the subject.

Ineffective speakers are invariably more focused on themselves than on you. Their presentations are mechanical and seemingly indifferent. That can easily happen when you're focusing on being perfect.

Think about it. If you know someone who's perfect and you like that person, is it because he or she is perfect, or in spite of it? As a speaker, perfection isn't a worthy goal.

Public speaking is about sharing ideas and being focused on the audience - not on how well we look or how perfectly prepared we might be. Why, then, do we try so hard to give a perfect presentation when the only possible result is that we won't be our usual charming selves?

People respond to us when they feel comfortable with us, when they relate to us, when they feel we're being genuine. That's all lost when we make an effort to be perfect, when we try to impress them rather than help them.

Wanting to be perfect makes you focus on your gestures, or your "uh's" or saying all the words exactly the way you wrote them down. The result is that you're focused on yourself rather than on your audience, and you'll look and feel stiff and mechanical.

The most important part of any presentation is your connection with the audience, that connection that says to them that you're genuine and believable. If you make that connection, they'll forgive a misspoken number or less than dynamic platform skills. Trying to be perfect keeps you from connecting and keeps you from selling your idea.

Don't try to be perfect. Be human.

Talking Plain and Simple

by Barbara Rocha

Call it anything you want. It's still talking: A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

What's the difference between a formal speech, a sales presentation, and a technical presentation?

The simple answer: the audience. If you're comfortable with any one of the formats, you can do the other two with very little in the way of new knowledge about speaking.

Let's look at what they have in common. The mental preparation is the same: you're there for a purpose. So first, focus on that.

The organization is essentially the same: the opening should get them to listen. You need to know where you're going and get there. There needs to be a logical flow from point to point. The close should leave them feeling complete—you've given them a reason for listening and a connection to their work or lives.

As always, it should be credible, conversational, convincing. And you need to be sincere. If you use visual aids, they need to be relevant and meaningful to your audience.

So any differences are audience-driven. Who are they? Why are they there? How much do they know? What's the reason for their being together? What are they expecting from you? What kind of people are they?

Whatever the answers are, your approach should be conversational because you're more believable and credible. Your version of conversational may vary with the audience, but that doesn't mean giving up being yourself. If you start using words and word patterns that aren't natural for you, you'll succeed in making yourself stiff, unnatural, and paranoid.

Your own natural speech patterns vary depending on whether you're talking to a 5 year-old, your brother, your grandmother, a coworker or your boss. They're all you; you just adjust your style, your words, and your examples based on the audience.

Keep that in mind when you're organizing any kind of talk. Get off yourself. Focus on the audience and how you can help them. You'll find there's not that much difference in the rest of the process.

When Things Go Wrong

By Barbara Rocha

PAINLESS PUBLIC SPEAKING = CONTROL.

I've been nervous and I've been not nervous, and I can tell you this: Not nervous is better. I used to be darned uncomfortable in front of an audience. I continuously felt the audience was expecting more of me than I could deliver. Maybe you experience that same anxiety.

So what's the secret? How do you get over feeling inadequate? Let's look at a typical scenario.

You're ready to go on. Your heart is pounding, your mouth is dry, your knees are weak; you wish it were over. Suddenly everything you ever imagined might go wrong flashes before your eyes - that upside-down slide, a typographic error, the missing budget numbers, that tricky word you kept tripping over during practice.

"What if I drop my slides again?"

"What if I forget how many units we shipped last quarter?"

"What if they notice my hands shaking?"

STOP! You're losing control because you've stopped being rational. At this moment it's hard to believe you can take charge, but you can.

Pause and breathe. Realize: "This isn't about me. This isn't about showcasing me. This is about connecting the audience with information they want or they need". It's about telling them what happened last quarter so they can confirm their decisions and take action. It's about a new opportunity, a chance to make a difference, what the future holds. It's not about you.

Nervousness is a choice. It's most often an unconscious choice (by default) but a choice nonetheless. It's like the default position on your computer - if you don't change the margins, you get what the computer gives you.

If nervousness is your default position before you speak, you can change that too. Instead of worrying about yourself, think about: 1.) Why the listeners need the information and 2.) How you can help them by giving it to them. The choice is yours. Communicate your ideas - not your fears.

But They're All Staring at Me!

By Barbara Rocha

You tell me not to be nervous, but there they all are looking right at me!"

That perspective only brings pain: turning panic into poise requires an attitude adjustment.

Good public speaking is 7 parts attitude and 3 parts technique. Here are a few attitude pointers that can make speaking fun.

Appreciate the opportunity to speak.

Attitude starts the moment someone asks you (tells you) to speak. "I'll be glad to" will take you much farther towards your goal of painless speaking than a groan and grimace.

It's never about you.

It's always about helping the audience. The quicker you realize the audience doesn't care about you (not in the way we think they do) that they're only interested in what you can do for them, the quicker you'll feel poised and in control.

Focus on the benefit to your audience.

Immediately identify how this topic will help this audience. Why do they need to hear it? Even if you've been asked to speak so they can judge your speaking ability, find a reason the audience needs the information. It's never about you.

Organize w/ audience in mind.

If it's not about you, then it's not about telling the audience everything you know or about impressing them. Find out what they need to know to satisfy their situation and make their lives better and organize around that. You'll feel like you're having a conversation and offering value to their lives and not like they're focused on you.

Recognize audience focus

Just like you, when your audience arrives they've got other things on their minds. And when they do get around to thinking about your presentation, it's more along the lines of "I wonder if I'll be bored." "I wonder if I'll get anything out of this that I can use." And even if they notice you're having a bad hair day, they don't really care. They're just glad it's not them.

Take your time getting started

Give yourself time to breathe and focus. Remind yourself they're not staring at you. They're looking in your direction from habit, while focusing on themselves and their needs.

It ain't over til it's over

Two sentences before the end it's easy to think, "I'm almost through." Resist that temptation. You're not finished until you're in the car on the way home. Any deviation from that will start you thinking it's about you, and wondering how to get out of there. To stay poised and feeling in control, stay focused on what you're there for, what you want them to do, and how they'll benefit from it.

Don't Worry Be Happy

By Barbara Rocha

The reason we give a speech DON'T WORRY BE HAPPY

Do you worry you're going to forget your speech-just blank out? Do you spend hours thinking about what words you're going to use and hope you'll remember them? Do you wonder why you're the one who has to give this speech?

Give it a rest. This speech isn't about you; it's about reaching your audience and filling a need they have. Even if your message was assigned by your boss, if you're not filling their needs, you're wasting your (and their) time.

It's also not about impressing them. It's about meeting your audience's needs. Am I repeating myself?

It's not about communicating information, either. If you want to transmit information, write it, don't say it. Writing presents details more efficiently, can be filed for reference, and can be focused on without regard to the transmitter's demeanor.

Reassure your audience (by connecting with them) that the project is in good hands, that they are on the right track, and that they don't have to recheck your work. If you help them feel confident of your credibility you'll be 90% successful, never mind how specific the information is.

If you think it's about information, keeping your job, or people liking you, you focus on your words rather than your ideas. You focus on your notes rather than your message. Result? Wooden, mechanical delivery. No connecting with the audience.


Get real. Be human. Connect with your audience as fellow human beings, not as empty business suits. They have lives. They are human. Connecting with them helps them hear your message. And that's why you're there.

Sir Colin Marshall, former president of British Airways: "What is the essential element any successful leader absolutely must have? It can be reduced to one word, and a rather simple one at that: caring." Substitute the word "speaker"

for "leader" and it's still true. "They need to know you care before they care about what you know .

Foiling Fear

by Barbara Rocha



Studies show that fear of public speaking is most people's worst fear - worse than the fear of death, poverty, or total incapacity. Once you change the head, the body's easy.

Think of it: people would rather die than speak in public. In fact, some briefly toy with the idea of an accident or illness just serious enough to get out of a speaking assignment.

That's scary. Why? Because the fear of public speaking is actually a choice for most people - an unconscious choice, but a choice, nonetheless. We choose to be afraid by default.

Think of the fear of public speaking as the default margins in your computer: If you don't set some other margin, you get the one already set in the machine - the default margin.

If that's true, how do you choose not to be afraid? If it's so easy, why doesn't everyone do it? And why do so many experts say you'll always be nervous, and that if you aren't you'll be boring?

People don't do it because they don't know it's possible. They assume nervousness is necessary and they just have to tough it out.

Here are two reasons people say they're always nervous, and that it's necessary in order to be good:

- People assume because they're always nervous that no one can get over it, and
- They're confusing happy adrenaline with fear adrenaline.

Remember, being nervous is only the default position; you don't have to go with the default setting. Instead, you can program yourself to think about your ideas and how they affect the audience.

Making a Difference

By Barbara Rocha

YOU'VE GOT THE POWER TO CHANGE THE WORLD

The Los Angeles Times used to run a dynamic ad that celebrated "the Power of One," stirring people to action by exemplifying numerous instances of individuals who have effected change.

One very powerful tool we have for fomenting change is the power to speak. Many of you ask how you can practice your new skills. Why not hone those skills on subjects that inspire your passion, and that have the potential for making even a small change in our society's status quo?

Consider some of the issues that concern you the most. Do you have personal experience or special knowledge of any of those? Or, better yet, in what ways do your experience and knowledge dovetail with those issues? There is some way that what you know and who you are intersects with at least one of those issues.

Now think of some audiences that are concerned about those same issues, and, also, some audiences who are inclined to be in tune with your credentials and/or experiences.

Whatever the connection between you, your passion, and your audience, build a talk based on that common ground, and have a rallying cry. Suggest a solution. Start a movement. Get them involved. And increase "the Power of One."

You'll get some marvelous experience both in organizing your thoughts effectively, and in delivering them passionately (while remaining invisible).

We all have "the Power of One" if we choose to use it. So, challenge yourself to make at least one speech this year supporting a favorite cause. And do it soon. Unleash your power and change a small part of our world.

Speaking Up for a Point

By Barbara Rocha

Speaking Up for a Point MARKETING YOUR BUSINESS

Is giving speeches a part of your marketing mix? If not, is it because you don't know how to go about getting speaking engagements, because you don't

know what to say to the audience, or because the thought of speaking brings on a case of the vapors?

If any of those is holding you back, getting the answers will give you a new marketing tool that's inexpensive and effective. This article will give you some of those answers. As a business owner, you've already surprised yourself with a number of heretofore hidden talents. And you've been pleased to validate the range and depth of your strengths. If speaking hasn't been one of your previous strengths, now's the time to add it to your repertoire.

First: Find your audience.

Your buyers are congregating somewhere you just need to find them. Your intuition will immediately identify an organization or association or two you'd like to reach.

You can look in your local Yellow Pages under Associations; check the reference section of your library or surf the Net for names of such groups; talk to meeting planners who schedule speakers.

You're looking for people who are interested in your subject who are likely to have an interest in doing business with you—if only they knew how wonderful you are.

It's probably not necessary to point out that you'll want to start with a few small audiences to refine your subject matter and your comfort level.

Solve a problem for your audience - that makes you an expert. If you're making the arrangements yourself, introduce yourself and your business to the meeting planner or marketing director of your target group in a letter outlining your topic, and include your credentials. This letter should be strongly aimed at WIIFT (What's In It For Them?).

Let them know you will call to be sure they got the letter, and in that call, reaffirm your interest in speaking to their group. Show your interest by asking some further questions about the group—perhaps about previous speakers they've had, or whether the makeup of their group has changed in the last couple of years.

Second: Decide what to say.

You may be going to all this trouble for a payoff—more business. But put that behind you when you're deciding what to say: focus on specific information you can give them that they can use.

If you're a florist, give them some information on how to decide which flowers will hold up best for an occasion that matters to them—an upcoming wedding, a party, Mother's Day corsage or plant. Or such topics as how to get the most for their money when they call a florist, or how to get cut flowers to last longer,

or how to make their own bridal bouquet.

Don't make it a commercial, and don't give away the store. You don't have to be afraid they'll all run out and do it themselves. Those who do weren't going to use your services anyway, and the rest of them will be impressed by your knowledge and your willingness to share.

If you sell cleaning products or are a cleaner, tell them how to remove stains from their clothing-don't tell them how long you've been in business and what a great job you do. Let that be a subtle message in your speech. And it's appropriate to have that in the brochure you leave with them.

If you are a meeting planner, tell them how to avoid headaches when dealing with a hotel, or what to watch for when they're designing the invitation.

Don't toot your own horn-"Here's what we can do for you. Here's how great we are." That's just an ad, and ads don't generate credibility. Credibility comes from demonstrating your competence in your field by giving information they won't otherwise come by in such a focused, accessible format.

Third: Get comfortable speaking.

You don't have to be nervous. Speaking is not about you-it's about helping your audience. You have a choice: you can either focus on what might happen to you, or what everyone may think about you, or you can focus on what they've come for.

Public Speaking Guide

From: American Legion Auxiliary, 2005, *Public Relations Handbook*, American Legion Auxiliary, Indianapolis, IN.

If a verbal invitation is extended, ask your host to confirm in writing the speaking date, time, location, requested speech content, length and any special arrangements. Prepare a brief introduction of yourself and send it to the program director.

Successful Presentation Tips

- Rehearse numerous times prior to the presentation.
- Arrive on time or a little early.
- Underline your key points.
- Dress comfortably in professional attire which will not distract the audience.
- Walk erect and with confidence when approaching the podium.
- Make eye contact with your audience and make sure to smile and keep a positive attitude.
- Your notes should be double-spaced and in large print. Number the pages.
- Speak slowly, distinctly, with confidence and sincerity. If you are positive and confident, the audience will find you credible.
- Keep your movement at the podium to a minimum.
- Show enthusiasm.
- Do not let visual aids dominate in your presentation. Stand to the left of the screen if one is used.
- Dim, but do not completely darken the room.
- Face your audience, not the visuals.
- Use gestures to enhance your presentation, being careful not to rattle papers or hit the microphone.
- Avoid using jargon, obscure technical terms or unfamiliar words. Keep it simple, concise and conversational.
- Inexperienced speakers are advised to avoid long stories, jokes or humorous anecdotes.
- Limit your speech to no longer than 20 minutes unless your host specified otherwise.
- Try to end your speech with an idea, not a quote. Never end with “Thank you.”

– Most importantly, relax and be yourself!

Elements of a Speech Checklist

Opening or Introduction:

- ✓ Thank the person who introduced you, and if necessary, address the highest ranking person present.
- ✓ Open the speech with a provocative idea or dramatic statement to gain attention. A quote from a famous person ... or document is an effective way to set the stage for your speech.
- ✓ Let the audience know exactly what you intend to talk about and why it is important.

Body of the Speech:

- ✓ Check your facts, know your sources and have them available.
- ✓ Develop 3-5 main points, one at a time. Too many points will not be remembered. If more are necessary, use visual aids and hand out materials to reinforce them.
- ✓ Use smooth transitions to flow from one point to another. Don't move back and forth between points.
- ✓ Use clear, precise information.
- ✓ Vary sentence length and the intensity of delivery, raising and lowering your voice to regain attention.
- ✓ Give examples to prove your points and drive home the facts.
- ✓ Ask rhetorical questions to involve the audience.
- ✓ Use personal experiences.

Conclusion:

- ✓ Have a strong finish. Summarize and restate your key points.
- ✓ Challenge the audience to take action and do something constructive.
- ✓ Praise and affirm their effort.

INTERVIEWS

The Interview

From: American Legion Auxiliary, 2005, *Public Relations Handbook*, American Legion Auxiliary, Indianapolis, IN.

Make certain you have a story to tell. If you do not have a message to tell readers, viewers or listeners, forego the interview.

Convey your message.

Don't assume the reporter knows the history of the organization.

Simply answering questions with one's own opinion fails to serve the best interest of the organization.

Do not take partisan stands. Talk to issues using the message points.

In order to ensure that the important facts are included in an interview, one must study the message points prior to the interview.

Most of us learned at a young age that when a question was asked, to answer it. Wait for another question to be asked. If we were asked another question, we followed the same process: answer and stop. A diagram of such a conversation would look like this:

Q, A. Q, A. Q, A. Q, A.

This is called a "Question-Answer – Question-Answer" dialogue. In this situation, the individual asking the question has complete control.

When being interviewed, one must go beyond answering the question. Take control of the interview and use information from pre-formulated message points.

To take control:

- answer the question and simply add relevant message points.
- "stay on message," making certain the facts presented are important and relevant

A diagram of such a conversation would look like this:

Q, A. A. A. – Q, A. A. A. – Q, A. A. A.

This is called a "Question-Answer-Answer-Answer" dialogue. You take control. You answer the question and then bridge into your message points.

Bridging

What would happen if you were involved in an interview about a major event at your Unit? You were prepared with message points, but were never asked the question to give you the opportunity to “stay on message?” Taking control becomes natural when you understand the trick of “bridging.”

Bridging is used to move from a quick answer to one of your message points. It is as simple as moving from the answer to the question with a phrase.

Examples:

“The real issue here is . . .”

“Yet, it’s really a case of . . .”

“What is important is . . .”

“That is just the first step . . .”

With practice, you will soon learn how to take control without regard to the question asked. A common misconception is that you only need to make your point once. In fact, the more you make the same point, the better chance your message point will be aired on radio or television or printed in the newspaper.

Interviews that last 15 minutes or more demand that you make your point over and over again because only a brief part of what you say will make it to the story.

Flagging

The technique to make it easy for a reporter to remember your key point is known as “flagging.” Think of flagging as a way of telling your best friend the most important point of an issue. When you’ve covered a lot of information over 15 or 20 minutes of an interview, flagging will help the reporter sort out the key points, quickly.

Many times, an interview will end with the reporter asking if you’d like to say something that hasn’t been covered. That’s the perfect time to “flag” by re-emphasizing the most important point. The simple phrase: *“Yes, if you only remember one thing in looking at this issue is . . . remember . . .”* is a flag to your main point.

Other examples include:

“There are many facets to the problem – but what you must remember is . . .”

“The most important fact to remember is . . .”

“It all boils down to . . .”

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Use the power of positive language in your communication

By Kim Harrison,

Consultant, Author and Principal of www.cuttingedgepr.com

The disciplined use of positive language brings benefits in all types of media interviews, public meetings and confrontations with pressure groups.

Contrary to popular belief and much PR mythology, negative articles and headlines are generally driven by the negative language and examples that spokespersons use. Even the best interview often results in a story with a negative slant simply because a single negative phrase was used. Reporters and others habitually phrase their questions and information requests in negative ways that demand negative responses.

Positive language will enable you to control or frame your communication. Using positive, declarative language and power words will overcome negative and 'toxic' language.

Look what happens with negative imagery: on 17 November 1973, Richard Nixon famously declared to an Associated Press managing editors conference in Orlando, Florida, that "people have got to know whether or not their President is a crook. Well, I'm not a crook." By repeating the negative language, his words immediately made everyone think of him as a crook.

When Basil Fawlty in the English television comedy series 'Fawlty Towers' instructed his staff, "Don't mention the war," when they spoke to German guests at his hotel, he was the main offender, hilariously.

In the same way, when people are interviewed in the media, many fall into the trap of using denials that repeat the original allegation, thus perpetuating the claim against them. For example, when the chief executive says, "My company didn't poison the soil at the mining site," he is only reinforcing the strength of the accusation in people's minds. If he is preparing for such an interview, when this type of question is predictable, he should prepare a response in positive language: "My company has a 100% record in maintaining the highest environmental standards."

When confronted with a negative accusation or statement the response should be made only in positive, declarative language. Some examples of positive declarations that have been converted out of negative words are:

Negative response: "No, the project won't run at a loss."

Positive response: "The project is still scheduled to run on time and on budget."

Negative response: "It won't have a detrimental impact on the environment..."

Positive response: "The environmental impact will be minimal [zero?]."

Negative response: "That's wrong. We didn't pay less than the amount claimed."

Positive response: "If you check the facts, you'll find we paid the full amount."

Negative response: "We didn't do that"

Positive response: "Here's what we actually did."

Loaded language

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Loaded language (also known as **emotive language** or **high-inference language**) is wording that attempts to influence the listener or reader by appealing to [emotion](#).^{[1][2][3]}

Loaded words and phrases are those which have strong emotional overtones or connotations, and which evoke strongly positive or negative reactions beyond their literal meaning. For example, the phrase *tax relief* refers literally to deductions that a person might claim in order to reduce the amount of tax they must pay to their government. However, use of the emotive word *relief* implies that the tax was an unreasonable burden to begin with.

The appeal to emotion is often seen as being in contrast to an appeal to [logic](#) and [reason](#). However, emotion and reason are not necessarily always in conflict, nor is it true that an emotion cannot be a reason for an action. Murray and Kujundzic distinguish "prima facie reasons" from "considered reasons" when discussing this. A *prima facie* reason for, say, not eating mushrooms is that one does not like mushrooms. This is an emotive reason. However, one still may have a *considered* reason for not eating mushrooms: one might consume enough of the relevant minerals and vitamins that one could obtain from eating mushrooms from other sources. An emotion, elicited via emotive language, may form a *prima facie* reason for action, but further work is required before one can obtain a *considered* reason.^[3]

Emotive arguments and loaded language are particularly persuasive because they prey on the human weakness for acting immediately based upon an emotional response, *without* such further considered judgment. They are thus suspect, and many people recommend their avoidance in argument and in speech when fairness and impartiality is one of the goals. Weston, for example, addressing students and writers, admonishes them to "[i]n general, avoid language whose only function is to sway the emotions".^{[3][1]}

In contrast, politicians desire the use of loaded language, and often receive coaching on how to use it effectively, with words to avoid, words to use, and words to use when labeling one's opponents. Heller gives the example that rare is the politician in the English speaking world who talks about "public spending" instead of "investment in public services".^[4]

One of the facets of loaded language is that loaded words and phrases occur in pairs. Heller names the elements of such a pair "a Boo! version and a Hooray! version", for the words/phrases with negative and positive emotional connotations, respectively. Examples include "bureaucrat" versus "public servant", "anti-life" versus "pro-choice", "regime" versus "government", and "elitist" versus "expert".^[4]

Political correctness

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Political correctness (adjectivally, **politically correct**; both forms commonly abbreviated to **PC**) is a term applied to [language](#), ideas, policies, or behavior seen as seeking to minimize offense to gender, racial, cultural, disabled, aged or other identity groups. Conversely, the term "politically incorrect" is used to refer to language or ideas that may cause offense or that are seen as unconstrained by [orthodoxy](#).

The term itself and its usage are controversial. The term "political correctness" is used almost exclusively in a [pejorative](#) sense,^{[1][2]} while "politically incorrect" is sometimes used as an implicitly positive self-description, as in the series of "[Politically Incorrect Guides](#)", produced by [conservative](#) publisher [Regnery](#)^[3] and the former talk show [Politically Incorrect](#).

Explanations

Political correctness is sometimes linked to movements which wish to produce an [equality of outcome](#) in all areas of life, including the inner world of [self esteem](#).

[_]As a linguistic concept

In addressing the linguistic problem of naming, Edna Andrews says that using "inclusive" and "neutral" language is based upon the concept that "language represents thought, and may even control thought".^[18] This claim has been derived from the [Sapir-Whorf hypothesis](#), which states that a language's grammatical categories shape the speaker's ideas and actions; although Andrews says that moderate conceptions of the relation between language and thought are sufficient to support the "reasonable deduction . . . [of] cultural change via linguistic change".^[19]

Other cognitive psychology and cognitive linguistics works indicate that word-choice has significant "[framing effects](#)" on the perceptions, memories, and attitudes of speakers and listeners.^{[20][21]} The relevant empirical question is whether or not [sexist language](#) promotes sexism, i.e. sexist thought and action.

Advocates of [inclusive language](#) defend it as inoffensive-language usage whose goal is multi-fold:

1. The rights, opportunities, and freedoms of certain people are restricted because they are reduced to [stereotypes](#).
2. Stereotyping is mostly implicit, unconscious, and facilitated by the availability of pejorative labels and terms.
3. Rendering the labels and terms socially unacceptable, people then must consciously think about *how* they describe someone unlike themselves.
4. When labelling is a conscious activity, the described person's *individual* merits become apparent, rather stereotypical.

Critics of such arguments, and of inclusive language in general, commonly use the terminology of "political correctness" [\[4\]](#).

A common criticism is that terms chosen by an identity group, as acceptable descriptors of themselves, then pass into common usage, including usage by the racists and sexists whose

racism and sexism, et cetera, the new terms mean to supersede. The new terms are thus devalued, and another set of words must be coined, giving rise to lengthy progressions such as *Negro*, *Coloured*, *Black*, *African-American*, and so on, (cf. [Euphemism treadmill](#)).

Sound bite

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

In [film](#) and [broadcasting](#), a **sound bite** is a very short piece of a [speech](#) taken from a longer [speech](#) or an [interview](#) in which someone with [authority](#) or the average "man on the street" says something which is considered by those who _ the speech or interview to be the most important point. It is often abbreviated with SOT. ^[1]

Before the actual term "sound bite" had been coined, [Mark Twain](#) described the concept as "a minimum of sound to a maximum of sense." It is characterized by a short phrase or sentence that deftly captures the essence of what the speaker is trying to say. Such key moments in dialogue (or monologue) stand out better in the audience's memory and thus become the "taste" that best represents the entire "meal" of the larger message or conversation. Sound bites are a natural consequence of people placing ever greater emphasis on summarizing ever-increasing amounts of information in their lives.

It can be an extract of a music album.

As the [context](#) of what is being said is missing, the insertion of sound bites into news broadcasts or documentaries is open to [manipulation](#) and thus requires a very high degree of [journalistic ethics](#). According to the [Code of Ethics](#) of the [Society of Professional Journalists](#), journalists should "make certain that headlines, news teases and promotional material, photos, video, audio, graphics, sound bites and quotations do not misrepresent. They should not oversimplify or highlight incidents out of context." ^[2]

[Politicians](#) of the new generation are carefully coached by their [spin doctors](#) to produce on-demand sound bites which are clear and to the point.

Historical sound bites

Classic examples of sound bites include [Ronald Reagan's](#) demand that "[Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!](#)" in reference to the increasing social pressure to remove the [Berlin Wall](#). In this context, the well-delivered sound bite serves as a [cultural icon](#) that others are not likely to know about.

More sound bites include:

- "[The only thing we have to fear is - fear itself.](#)" (the most famous phrase in [Franklin D. Roosevelt's](#) first [Inaugural Address](#) in 1933)
- "Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy....." (the opening phrase of Franklin D. Roosevelt's [speech](#) declaring war on [Japan](#) the day after [Pearl Harbor](#) had been attacked)

- "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." (the most famous phrase in John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address in 1961)
- "Ich bin ein Berliner" John F. Kennedy at 26. June 1963.
- "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." Neil Armstrong from the Apollo 11 mission
- "Houston, we've had a problem." (said by James A. Lovell in the Apollo XIII mission)
- "Read my lips: no new taxes", delivered by United States presidential candidate George H. W. Bush
- "Senator, you are no Jack Kennedy." said by Lloyd Bentsen as a retort to Dan Quayle's comparison of himself to Jack Kennedy in terms of political experience
- "I feel the hand of history upon our shoulders" — Tony Blair following the 1998 Good Friday agreement. Blair had just commented that "A day like today, it's not a day for soundbites: we can leave those at home".^[3]

Buzzword

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A **buzzword** (also **fashion word** and **vogue word**) is a vague [idiom](#), usually a [neologism](#), that is common to managerial, technical, administrative, and political work environments. Although meant to impress the listener with the speaker's pretense to knowledge, buzzwords render sentences opaque, difficult to understand and questionable, because the buzzword does not mean what it denominates, yet does mean other things it ought not mean.^[1] [George Orwell](#), in "[Politics and the English Language](#)," wrote that people use buzzwords because they are convenient. It is much easier to copy the words and phrases that someone invented than it is to come up with one's own.^[2]

Buzzwords differ from [jargon](#); the speaker tries to impress the listener with obscure meanings, while jargon (ideally) has a defined technical meaning. However, if only given to specialists; the advertising hyperbole written to sell new technologies often converts technical terms into buzzwords. They are then used by the salesman in selling something to the listener. In the event, mainstream usage of buzzwords, fashion words, and vogue words does register some to the [dictionary](#); however, once in the dictionary, the buzzword's meaning(s) might no longer correspond with the mainstream and "street" usages.

Reasons for using buzzwords

Individual examples

Below are a few examples of common buzzwords. For a more complete list, see [list of buzzwords](#).

- [Dynamic](#)

- Empowerment^[3]
- Enterprise^[4]
- Framework^[3]
- Immersion^[5]
- Leverage
- Long Tail^[6]
- Next Generation^[4]
- Paradigm^[7]
- Paradigm shift^[8]
- Proactive^[9]
- Synergy^[9]
- Web 2.0^[3]
- Tipping Point (political)^[10]

Here are samples from the automated Dilbert Mission Statement Generator, which was hosted on the United Media website^[1]:

- "It's our responsibility to continually provide access to low-risk high-yield benefits and collaboratively administrate economically sound materials while promoting personal employee growth."
- "It's our responsibility to authoritatively negotiate market-driven technology so that we may conveniently build low-risk high-yield opportunities to stay competitive in tomorrow's world."
- "We have committed to assertively integrate high-quality infrastructures to exceed customer expectations."

Cliché

A **cliché** (US: [/kliˈʃeɪ/](#) UK: [/ˈkliːʃeɪ/](#), from [French](#)), is a saying, expression, idea, or element of an artistic work which has been overused to the point of losing its original meaning or effect, rendering it a [stereotype](#), especially when at some earlier time it was considered meaningful or novel. The term is frequently used in modern culture for an action or idea which is expected or predictable, based on a prior event. It is likely to be used pejoratively. A cliché may sometimes be used in a work of fiction for comedic effect.

One can consider a cliché to be a sort of stereotypical instance of a category of concepts.

Archetype

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For other uses, see [Archetype \(disambiguation\)](#).

An **archetype** (pronounced [/ˈɑrkiˌtaɪp/](#)) is an original model of a person, ideal example, or a prototype after which others are copied, patterned, or emulated; a symbol universally recognized by all. In psychology, an archetype is a model of a person, personality, or behavior.

In the analysis of personality, the term *archetype* is often broadly used to refer to

1. a [stereotype](#)—personality type observed multiple times, especially an [oversimplification](#) of such a type; or
2. an [epitome](#)—personality type exemplified, especially the "greatest" such example.
3. a literary term to express details.

Archetype refers to a generic version of a personality. In this sense "mother figure" may be considered an archetype and may be identified in various characters with otherwise distinct (non-generic) personalities.

Archetypes are likewise supposed to have been present in [folklore](#) and literature for thousands of years, including prehistoric artwork. The use of archetypes to illuminate personality and literature was advanced by [Carl Jung](#) early in the 20th century, who suggested the existence of universal contentless forms that channel experiences and emotions, resulting in recognisable and typical patterns of behaviour with certain probable outcomes.

Sexed up

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Sexed up refers to making something more sexually appealing. Since 2003 it has been used in the sense of making something more attractive than it really is by selective presentation; a modern update to the phrase "[hyped](#) up". Variants include "sex it up". The implication is that no actual lying is taking place, but that [spin](#) is being placed on certain parts of the message.

Usage

- "One event in particular sours many freshman orientations: sexed-up sex-ed."^[4]
- "Some things remain the same, but critics all say that the show was 'sexed up' by the [CW](#) for today's audiences."^[5]
- In "[The God Delusion](#)", [Richard Dawkins](#) states that [pantheism](#) is "sexed up [atheism](#)" while "[deism](#) is watered-down [theism](#)".

Modes of persuasion

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **modes of persuasion** are devices in [rhetoric](#) that classify the speaker's appeal to the audience. They are: [ethos](#), [pathos](#) and [logos](#).

[Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*](#) describes the modes of persuasion thus:

Persuasion is clearly a sort of demonstration, since we are most fully persuaded when we consider a thing to have been demonstrated.

Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. [...] Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's *personal character* when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. [...] Secondly, persuasion may come through the hearers, when the *speech stirs their emotions*. [...] Thirdly, persuasion is effected through the *speech itself* when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth by means of the persuasive arguments suitable to the case in question.

Ethos

Ethos is an appeal to the authority or honesty of the speaker. It is how well the speaker convinces the audience that he or she is qualified to speak on the particular subject. It can be done in many ways:

- By being a notable figure in the field in question, such as a college professor or an executive of a company whose business is that of the subject.
- By having a vested interest in a matter, such as the person being related to the subject in question.
- By using impressive [logos](#) that shows to the audience that the speaker is knowledgeable on the topic.
- By appealing to a person's ethics or character.

Pathos

Pathos is an appeal to the audience's ethical judgment. It can be in the form of [metaphor, simile](#), a passionate delivery, or even a simple claim that a matter is unjust. Pathos can be particularly powerful if used well, but most speeches do not solely rely on pathos. Pathos is most effective when the author connects with an underlying value of the reader.

Logos

Logos is logical appeal, and the term *logic* is derived from it. It is normally used to describe facts and figures that support the speaker's topic. Since data is difficult to manipulate, especially if from a trusted source, logos may sway cynical listeners. Having a logos appeal also enhances *ethos* (see [above](#)) because information makes the speaker look knowledgeable and prepared to his or her audience. However, data can be confusing and thus confuse the audience. Logos can also be misleading or inaccurate.

How to win over people to your point of view

By Kim Harrison,

Consultant, Author and Principal of www.cuttingedgepr.com

Legendary management thinker, Peter Drucker, is quoted as saying “Communication takes place in the mind of the listener, not the speaker.”

In other words, the important thing is what the listener perceives, not what you are trying to say. Your listener filters your carefully wrought message through their filters to form a message from what they thought they heard.

For instance, what you tried to say may be different from what you actually said, which may in turn be different from what you thought you said.

Then what you actually said needs to get past barriers to reach the other person. The barriers may be distractions, noise, interruptions, disruptions, intrusions or diversions –either internally as thoughts or externally as physical things.

What the receiver actually heard may be different from what they thought they heard.

And what the receiver of a message may have thought they heard may be influenced by factors such as their values, culture, environment, knowledge, attitudes, opinions, experiences, occupation, sex, and interests.

Finally, the receiver takes away the message from what they thought they heard. Given all this, communication is definitely not a simple task!

Drucker could easily have been thinking of non-verbal communication when he made his observation – we can easily forget how we are perceived, especially how our body language is perceived by others.

People aren't idiots. They like to think they are rational, and when they aren't being rational, there is an emotional reason for their attitudes. When a person resists your message, try to put yourself in their shoes. Try to understand why they have resisted your point.

Resistance may simply stem from a misunderstanding of your message and intent. If this is a possibility, ask them questions to clarify their understanding. This may solve the problem.

However, if they still refuse to agree with your point of view, it is likely their emotions are behind their attitude.

Fear is likely to be the cause of negative emotions at this level. People fear the consequences of your idea. For instance, if you are talking about change, they may fear for their jobs or for the jobs of others. In this case, try to explore the basis of the fear. Ask them to discuss their reasons for their negative attitude, and keep probing. Keep asking “Why” until you take them to a deeper level in which the real reasons for their resistance become apparent.

But there may be a third reason for resistance. The other person may object to you or what you represent: “I don’t like you.” This is also emotional.

If you believe this third reason is why they aren’t cooperating, listen closely to what they say.

Before you can be persuasive, you need to create credibility with them – give them the opportunity to trust you – and lead them to like you. Find out as much about them as you can – their professional roles, the formative things in their careers and their demographics, and what has led them to take a particular stance on the issue in question.

Good sales people do this. They take an interest in the person they are dealing with so that person likes them.

Another tip is to present your information in consistent ways so that your non-verbal communication is aligned with your words. Leaders are positive, so don’t get involved with negative gossip and speculation. Instead, think of positive, but not banal, things to say. As above, take an interest in the people you are dealing with and follow up what they say with questions to explore their views further. Make your body language and movements open and inclusive. Use open gestures of your arms and offer reasonable eye contact to each person.

A final suggestion is to present the opposing information along with your side of the argument when you know the subject is debatable. This is the tactic used by political lobbyists. When they present a case to a politician, a good lobbyist will always include the argument of opponents so the politician is aware of both sides of the argument and isn’t caught by surprise when the opposing view is later pushed. When you raise the opposing side of the case first, it reduces the opportunity to resist your case. And seek their suggestions. When you are inclusive and seek their help in developing the case, they are much more likely to at least meet you halfway, if not further.

If you take the trouble to follow up on these suggestions you are likely to develop more positive long-term relationships with others and are more likely to win their support when previously they may have resisted your side of the argument. And it is likely their views have merit – you will probably compromise to some extent to reach a mutually satisfactory result.

Kim Harrison is a recognized authority in the public relations field. His website, www.cuttingedgepr.com, provides a wealth of informative articles and resources on public relations techniques and management.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Listen With Your Eyes

Tips for Understanding Nonverbal Communication

By [Susan M. Heathfield](#), About.com

Is there ever any doubt in your mind as to the mood of a coworker upon their arrival at work? Nonverbal communication is the single most powerful form of communication. More than voice or even words, nonverbal communication cues you in to what is on another person's mind. The best communicators are sensitive to the power of the emotions and thoughts communicated nonverbally.

Nonverbal communication ranges from facial expression to body language. Gestures, signs, and use of space are also important in nonverbal communication. Multicultural differences in body language, facial expression, use of space, and especially, gestures, are enormous and enormously open to misinterpretation.

To gauge your expertise in interpreting nonverbal communication, take these [nonverbal communication interpretation quiz questions](#) from the University of California at Santa Cruz. Each link leads to pictorial quiz questions and explanations.

One of the funniest – yet saddest – nonverbal exchanges I have ever witnessed occurred in the registrar's office at a major university. A multinational student tried to communicate his problem to an older, white female. He gesticulated constantly waving his hands to punctuate his communication.

He tried to narrow the distance between himself and the university employee who kept backing away to maintain her level of spatial comfort. By the end of the conversation, the student was chasing her the length of the countertop still gesturing with his hands heatedly. The employee told me later that she had been terrified of the student who was merely trying to tell her that he had already paid the bill he had just received from the university.

One study at UCLA indicated that up to 93 percent of communication effectiveness is determined by nonverbal cues. Another study indicated that the impact of a performance was determined 7 percent by the words used, 38 percent by voice quality, and 55 percent by the nonverbal communication.

If you want to mask your feelings or your immediate reaction to information, pay close attention to your nonverbal behavior. You may have your voice and words under control, but your body language including the tiniest facial expressions and movement can give your true thoughts and feelings away. Especially to a skilled reader of nonverbal cues, most of us are really open books.

Here are several tips for improving your reading of nonverbal information. No matter your position at work, improving your skill in interpreting nonverbal communication will add to your ability to share meaning with another person.

Shared meaning is my definition of communication. Correct interpretation of nonverbal communication will add depth to your ability to communicate.

Tips for Understanding Nonverbal Communication

Recognize that people communicate on many levels. Watch their facial expressions, eye contact, posture, hand and feet movements, body movement and placement, and appearance and passage as they walk toward you. Every gesture is communicating something if you listen with your eyes. Become accustomed to watching nonverbal communication and your ability to read nonverbal communication will grow with practice.

If a person's words say one thing and their nonverbal communication says another, you are wont to listen to the nonverbal communication – and that is usually the correct decision.

Assess job candidates based on their nonverbal communication. You can read volumes from how the applicant sits in the lobby. The nonverbal communication during an interview should also elucidate the candidate's skills, strengths, weaknesses, and concerns for you.

Probe nonverbal communication during an investigation or other situation in which you need facts and believable statements. Again, the nonverbal may reveal more than the person's spoken words.

When leading a meeting or speaking to a group, recognize that nonverbal cues can tell you:

- when you've talked long enough,
- when someone else wants to speak, and
- the mood of the crowd and their reaction to your remarks.

Listen to them and you'll be a better leader and speaker.

Understanding nonverbal communication improves with practice. The first step in practice is to recognize the power of nonverbal communication. I'm sure you've had gut feelings that what a person said to you was untrue. Listen to your gut. Along with your life experiences, training, beliefs and all that make up your past, it's your inner expert on nonverbal communication.

Types of Nonverbal Communication

By [Kendra Van Wagner](#), About.com

According to experts, a substantial portion of our communication is nonverbal. Every day, we respond to thousands on nonverbal cues and behaviors including postures, facial expression, eye gaze, gestures, and tone of voice. From our handshakes to our hairstyles, nonverbal details reveal who we are and impact how we relate to other people.

Scientific research on nonverbal communication and behavior began with the 1872 publication of Charles Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. Since that time, there has been an abundance of research on the types, effects, and expression of unspoken communication and behavior. While these signals are often so subtle that we are not consciously aware of them, research has identified several different types of nonverbal communication.

1. Facial Expression

Facial expressions are responsible for a huge proportion of nonverbal communication. Consider how much information can be conveyed with a smile or a frown. While nonverbal communication and behavior can vary dramatically between cultures, the facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, and fear are similar throughout the world.

2. Gestures

Deliberate movements and signals are an important way to communicate meaning without words. Common gestures include waving, pointing, and using fingers to indicate number amounts. Other gestures are arbitrary and related to culture.

3. Paralinguistics

Paralinguistics refers to vocal communication that is separate from actual language. This includes factors such as tone of voice, loudness, inflection, and pitch. Consider the powerful effect that tone of voice can have on the meaning of a sentence. When said in a strong tone of voice, listeners might interpret approval and enthusiasm. The same words said in a hesitant tone of voice might convey disapproval and a lack of interest.

4. Body Language and Posture

Posture and movement can also convey a great deal on information. Research on body language has grown significantly since the 1970's, but popular media have focused on the over-interpretation of defensive postures, arm-crossing, and leg-crossing, especially after the publication of Julius Fast's book *Body Language*. While these nonverbal behaviors can indicate feelings and attitudes, research suggests that body language is far more subtle and less definitive than previously believed.

5. Proxemics

People often refer to their need for “personal space,” which is also an important type of nonverbal communication. The amount of distance we need and the amount of space we perceive as belonging to us is influenced by a number of factors including social norms, situational factors, personality characteristics, and level of familiarity. For example, the amount of personal space needed when having a casual conversation with another person usually varies between 18 inches to four feet. On the other hand, the personal distance needed when speaking to a crowd of people is around 10 to 12 feet.

6. Eye Gaze

Looking, staring, and blinking can also be important nonverbal behaviors. When people encounter people or things that they like, the rate of blinking increases and pupils dilate. Looking at another person can indicate a range of emotions, including hostility, interest, and attraction.

7. Haptics

Communicating through touch is another important nonverbal behavior. There has been a substantial amount of research on the importance of touch in infancy and early childhood. Harry Harlow’s classic monkey study demonstrated how the deprivation of touch and contact impedes development. Baby monkeys raised by wire mothers experienced permanent deficits in behavior and social interaction.

8. Appearance

Our choice of color, clothing, hairstyles, and other factors affecting appearance are also considered a means of nonverbal communication. Research on [color psychology](#) has demonstrated that different colors can invoke different moods. Appearance can also alter physiological reactions, judgment, and interpretations.

BUILDING RAPPORT

Coaching Skills – INFO NOTES (7) Authored by Steve Trivett

To be the best you can be you need to discover the magic of rapport. The principles and techniques of rapport hold the key to good communication. It is based on the idea that we like to communicate with people who we perceive to be like us. This is because we will only be influenced by people who we think like us as a person. It works best when feelings are authentic – that is you genuinely care about other people and have their interests at heart.

To get the outcome you want, you need to influence others to get the desired effect. This hinges on getting connected with what others want. Seek first to show that you understand and can empathise. Without feeling the respect and trust that comes from rapport, the rest of the conversation and relationship will have little impact.

The Principle of Matching

One sign that rapport is happening is when people in conversation adopt the same or similar physical postures and mannerisms – even their silhouettes suggest the same mirrored profile as they talk. You may not be conscious of this until your awareness is raised and you get a chance to practice it to the point where it becomes a good habit. See Info Notes (5) – Changing a Habit.

Building rapport

Practice is needed because it requires you to mirror facial movements, tone of voice, pace of speech, language used and your active listening demeanor.

MISMATCHING is a way of bringing a conversation to a close. Matching works just as well in group situations. You find that the person talking will look at you more than other people when you in rapport. This enables you to gain attention and have your contribution listened to. Done well, rapport is a powerful way of influencing others. Match their behaviour, pace your response and lead a change of rhythm.

When you first start to observe others and see how they use (or fail to use) rapport, note the consequences. If getting rapport feels daunting or embarrassing, start with 'cross over matching'. For example, if someone crosses their arms, cross your legs. If they tap their pen, just twirl yours. Don't worry about the other person noticing. This rarely happens. Just learn to move with the rhythm of the other person, not in an obvious copying way, but by following gently and with sensitivity. Match them to some degree – not in every way.

When you have reached a state of 'flow' then you can start to lead them towards a slower rhythm by changing the pace of your speech for example, but keeping the rapport going.

What is rapport ?

So, building rapport is a lot more than just matching people's behaviour. It involves appealing to styles of communication and people's expectations. Take replying to emails. Rapport is not about commenting on the weather, the family, passing the time of day, etc., unless that is raised

in the email you receive. If the tone is aggressive, it's not about replying in an aggressive manner, but being forthright in your tone and style. Seek first to understand.

People like people who are like themselves

Rapport is essential for any meaningful communication to take place, to engage someone's attention. Just because you are telling someone what to do, doesn't mean you are communicating. The more you subtly get into the style of the other person the more you will understand what their motives, attitudes, values, beliefs and feelings are.

Try this. Work in a threesome. One person observes while another talks about something that 'makes their your heart sing' to their partner. They will get into a rapport for a few minutes and then gradually lose interest and break the rapport. After 5 minutes, stop and reflect on how you all felt and what the observer noted. Swap round so you all get a go.

Some questions for the Observer

- Did you notice the preferred senses from the words being used ?
- Did you identify any values or beliefs ?
- Did they tell a story or use metaphors ?
- Did you notice what state of mind they were in ?
- Did the language appear passive or active ?
- Did they change body positions to mirror their partner ?
- Did they respond with smiles or gestures to reflect the other person's mood ?
- Did they keep eye contact – if so, for how long at a time ?
- Did the manner or attitude change when their partner lost interest ?

How to use rapport

There are many applications of using rapport for managers, here are a few that you can try for yourself.

- Putting a nervous interview candidate at ease. Start by pacing their behaviour, partially at least, then gradually opening your own behaviour as you lead them towards a more relaxed state by reducing the pace. Words of assurance without rapport will not work as well.
- Pacifying an angry boss or colleagues
- Persuading a colleague or client who is skeptical
- Getting someone to take an issue more seriously or more light-heartedly

- Bringing a meeting to order, or to a close without causing offence
- Persuading a group on an important matter
- Getting someone to be more enthusiastic
- Getting a change of mental or emotional state

Facial expression and general demeanor are important in all cases, as it can help to communicate mood. To generate enthusiasm you need to be enthusiastic yourself. Remember, whatever your words might say, the signals in your tone of voice, eye movements and body language will betray your real attitude and intentions.

Think . . . MATCH – PACE – LEAD it can work at every level

One of the simplest and most effective appraisal systems I have ever used involved training managers rapport building, active listening, how to be curious - and how to ask four questions.

1. What are your goals ?
2. How well did you do ?
3. What skills would help you develop further ?
4. What actions shall we commit to ?

How to use your senses

You can show that you are like others in the way that you think and behave. For example, some are pessimists and others are optimists. Some are tidy, whilst others are disorganised. Some people think in pictures, whilst others think in words or feelings. This is our preferred way of representing the world. We need to know this because it affects the way we learn and go about listening to others. It also has an impact on how we see the world – our world view or mental map.

Listen to others and get them to listen to you - discover your sensory preferences.

VISUAL PEOPLE – “I see what you mean”, “I have a blind spot on that”, “It appears to me if . . .” “Show me”, “In my mind’s eye . . .” “Shed some light on this for me”, etc. Visual people also tend to speak quickly at a higher pitch and shallower breathing, tending to look upwards.

AUDITORY PEOPLE – “In a manner of speaking”, “It rings a bell with me”, “Loud and clear”, “On the same wavelength”. “Whose calling the tune?”, “What makes her tick?”, etc. Auditory people often speak more slowly and resonantly with more rhythmic body movements and looking sideways.

KINAESTHETIC People – “Hold on a second”, “He’s a cool customer”, “She is a warm-hearted person”, “Thick skinned”, “They had a heated argument”, “I feel it in my bones”, “I will be in touch”, etc. Kinaesthetic people tend to speak slowly and ponderously, breathing slowly and looking down more.

To find out values you need to watch and listen. Pay attention to what excites them and what changes their state from interest to curiosity. What do they pay attention to? Pay attention to the smallest of changes so you can trace patterns of body movement associated with a change of thinking. When you know your own values and observe how you react, it becomes easier to see it in others.

Managers who listen with care and skill are in my experience few and far between. Those who have it, generate immense respect and influence over others. When you listen with rapport you are listening with your whole body attentive and focused on the other person. You not only listen to their words but getting insights into what they are thinking and feeling. You influence the conversation with your non-verbal behaviour more than anything else you do.

Try this. Listen with your whole body and focus 100% on the other person. How do you feel about being with this person? Notice their demeanor, breathing rate, eye movements. Rapport is a state of being with someone so closely that you feel you are entering their world.

When does rapport break down ?

Six of the most common reasons for the loss of rapport are:

Extreme self-consciousness stops you managing the rapport process at both a conscious and unconscious level. As a result you will be led by the other person all the time and find it difficult to break into the conversation fearing that you will not be valued.

An overwhelming need to be liked means you hold back on challenging others. This feeling arises from fear and a lack of self-confidence. We tend to keep profound disagreements to ourselves and therefore select friends because they share our opinions and prejudices.

Judgement often takes the form of toxic waste that we try to bury, but inevitably 'seeps out' in our body language, comments and attitudes.

Imposing our values can overwhelm others, even to the point where they withdraw from the conversation. Placing 'restrictions' on the other person can lead to them doing things to please you to get a favourable response. This can severely damage a relationship.

Preoccupation with your own life's events can make it difficult for others to make a contribution.

Unawareness of getting stuck in particular ways of talking and communicating. For example, asking leading or closed questions. Not matching the other person's energy level or pace of conversation.

Rapport requires a buoyant and sincere wish to understand the other person – see the world as they see it. At the same time you have to be self-aware and self-accepting, letting your own barriers down, free of the need to defend yourself. When you no longer fear others you will not feel the need to protect yourself from 'being different'.

When you want rapport to break down

To end a meeting or change the dynamic in a conversation you can use a number of 'mis matches' to break the rapport. Sometimes a breakdown can lead to a breakthrough. For example . . .

- fiddling with your watch or pen, even waggling your foot may suggest impatience
- sitting with crossed arms or sitting back in your chair when the other person isn't
- turning your chair and your body away from the other person
- touching your face while talking implies timidity and suggests you are withdrawing
- scowling, frowning or losing eye contact suggests disapproval or lack of interest

Taking Action

Try this simple self-test yourself and ask your team members to do it too. It will stimulate conversation about what you and your colleagues can do to develop their ability to establish a good rapport with each other. Rapport requires you to think about and make an effort to understand others before asking for what you want. We are all driven by our own wants, but to connect with others we need to get close enough to find out what their wants actually are. This provides insights into what might motivate them to act.

For example, if you want to get support from a boss who is primarily concerned about how much things cost and how it will make them look, then selling it to them on the basis of what you want, say improved training for staff, will not work. You have to answer the questions that make your boss feel that their wants have been taken into account when you advocate your training ideas. See Info Notes 5 - 'Using Powerful Questions'.

Answer each question truthfully with a simple YES or NO. Try not to dwell on the questions, as your first and instinctive response is probably the most accurate ! QUESTION YES NO

Are the majority of people you meet pleased to see you ?

Do your social groups say they miss you when you are not around ?

Do you find it easy to communicate with people you have just met ?

Do people turn to you for help ?

Do people find you approachable ?

Do people immediately understand what you say and mean ?

Do you usually get your own way ?

Do people willingly do what you ask of them ?

Do you have a wide and varied circle of friends ?

Do you have an even wider set of acquaintances ?

Would you describe yourself as persuasive ?

Do people readily accept your ideas ?

Are you able to remove the heat from an argument ?

At meetings, are you usually invited to contribute your arguments ?

Do you find it easy to sustain eye contact with someone ?

If you answer YES to more than half of these questions, you already have a good, instinctive sense of rapport. If you answered NO to more than half of these questions, you may need a greater conscious awareness of the importance and relevance of rapport in building relationships with people.

How would YOU have replied ?

Email message to Jane from Wendy

Jane

Have been looking further at the issue of your fees – which as you now, we are very concerned about. Your day rates are 15% higher than your nearest rival, and investigations among my contacts have shown that they have increased by over 30% since 2001. I attach a comparison of your fees today compared with those charged in a similar work that you did for us only a year ago.

Can you please justify to me:

1. Why you feel you can charge over the market rate for this type of work ?
2. Why there has been such a large upward movement in fees over the last 3 years ?

I feel very concerned about this

Wendy

Email reply from Jane to Wendy

Wendy

I have discussed the issue that you raised with our finance people internally. Please find attached a detailed explanation on both of the points you have mentioned which I hope will serve to clarify our position on rates and illustrate that our rate increases are quite different to those you have indicated. Once you have had a chance to read this through I think it might be sensible for us to speak or even meet to discuss the next stage I look forward to hearing from you

Regards

Jane

If you were Wendy, with an understanding of the principles of rapport – compose a reply to Jane ?

Using your senses.

All you have to do is assess how easy or hard it is for you to internally represent each situation or experience. If the thought is as real as real life score it as a 9 on the 1 to 9 scale. If you have difficulty getting a clear image score 1 or 2 as you feel appropriate. Score all the questions and statements below . Be as honest and consistent in your scoring as you can and you will finish up with your likely preference.

VISUAL Score AUDITORY Score

1. Which of your friends or relatives has the longest hair ?
1. Hear a favourite tune
2. Recall the face of a teacher from when you were at school
2. Listen to church bells ringing in the distance
3. Visualise the stripes of a tiger 3. Which of your friends has the quietest voice ?
4. See the colour of the front door where you live or work
4. Hear a car engine starting on a cold morning
5. See a favourite entertainer on your TV screen wearing a top hat
5. Imagine hearing the voice of a childhood friend
6. Visualise the largest book in your house 6. Listen to the sound your voice makes under water

Total Total

KINAESTHETIC

1. Feel your left hand in very cold water
2. Hold a smooth, glass paperweight in your hand
3. Stroke a cat or dog
4. Put on a pair of wet socks
5. Imagine jumping off a four-foot-high wall
6. Roll a car wheel down the road

Total

You should now be able to identify your own thinking preference, and that of those you frequently communicate with. This is valuable intelligence for any manager. Using the principle of rapport, you should be able to adjust your behaviour to improve your hit rate of successful encounters.

Consider the difficulties that may be encountered by people with a different preference.

Now that you are aware of sensory differences and the implications for building rapport recall instances of where **MISMATCHING** happened and what consequences flowed from it.

Now add up your total score for each of the three senses. Notice whether one of the three categories gives you a higher score than the other two. Are there any senses with a low score that you feel you need to work on?

Rapport Exercise - What Makes Your Heart Sing Exercise

Ask the individuals in the group to think what is it in their lives that make their 'hearts sing.' What makes them get out of bed in the morning, what is the most important thing in their lives? This could be family, hobbies, experience, a place, home, pets, beliefs and etc. etc.

Each person writes a short sentence to describe this. In groups of three, one person acts as an observer and the other two having a conversation. Each person gets a turn having a conversation and acting as an observer. Person A relates what it is that makes their 'heart sing' to person B. For about 30 seconds or so person B listens actively, with positive and encouraging questions and body language, after 30 seconds person B 'switches off' and becomes disinterested and detached from the conversation and this is echoed in their body language and general demeanor. Person C observing then feeds back on the conversation and the process is discussed. The pattern is repeated until all have had their turn.

Teaching Learners to Use Mirroring: Rapport

Lessons From Neurolinguistic Programming

John Clabby, PhD; Robert O'Connor, MD

There is a renewed emphasis on the need to teach and assess communication skills. The Association of American Medical Colleges encourages both medical schools and residencies to include communication skills in their curricula.^{1,2} In addition, the Federation of State Medical Boards, the National Board of Medical Examiners, and the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates have collaborated to develop the US Medical Licensing Examination-Step 2 Clinical Skills, which includes an assessment of students' ability to establish rapport and communicate with patients.^{3,4} In the Kalamazoo Consensus statement, participants in the Bayer-Fetzer Conference on Communication in Medical Education concluded that "a strong, therapeutic, and effective relationship is the *sine qua non* of physician-patient communication."⁵

An important aspect of developing therapeutic relationships with patients is the building of rapport. Teaching learners to build rapport presents a number of challenges. One is that there is not a clear consensus on what constitutes positive rapport building. In one study, faculty examined the same videotape segment of a rapport-building exchange and had divergent observations of the quality of the rapport building, ranging from positive to inadequate and even negative.¹ A second challenge is that faculty are not consistent in evaluating a learner's rapport-building skills across an encounter. In this same study, 72% of the faculty identified specific rapport skills demonstrated in the early phase of the interview, but only 25% were able to identify those same rapport-building skills later in the same interview.¹

Neurolinguistic programming (NLP) offers a mirroring approach that office-based teachers can use to teach learners how to build rapport with their patients. Neurolinguistic programming resulted from John Grinder and Richard Bandler's detailed observations and analysis of the words, voice tone, and body language used by expert therapists to establish rapport and effect changes in others. These expert therapists included Milton Erickson, a hypnotherapist and psychiatrist; Fritz Perls, a psychotherapist; Virginia Satir, a family therapist; and Gregory Bateson, an anthropologist and social psychologist.⁶ In their observations, Grinder and Bandler noted that Ms Satir matched her predicates (verbs, adverbs, and adjectives) to those used by her clients.⁷ Further study revealed that such mirroring was common to the artistry used by all four experts in communication.

Mirroring techniques, both physical and verbal, can easily be adapted into the methods in which learners interview patients and take their histories.

Physical Mirroring

As a post-polio patient, Dr Erickson was severely restricted in his movements, yet as a physician, he was a master at building rapport by subtly mirroring his patients' body language. In mirroring his patients, he would not directly imitate the patient but would simply tilt his head at an angle similar to the angle of his patient's and/or respond with body movements comparable to those performed by the patient.

It is important for the learner to understand the difference between imitating and mirroring. In response to the patient who crosses his/her left leg over the right, the imitator will duplicate the patient's movement by crossing his/her left leg over his/her right. However, the physician practicing physical mirroring will do the opposite by crossing the right leg over the left, as if the patient was looking in a mirror. In teaching learners to use physical mirroring techniques, office-based teachers should remind learners that a key aspect of physical mirroring is to be subtle and inexact since being obvious may decrease rapport.

Therefore, the physician's mirroring should lag behind the patient by a few seconds to several minutes.

Verbal Mirroring

In casual conversation outside the office, doctors often nod their heads and say "Okay," "I see," "Uh huh," etc. When they repeatedly use this in the office to confirm they have heard what the patient just said, they may appear disingenuous and lose a valuable opportunity to build rapport. In contrast, some degree of quietness on the part of the physician can be soothing. In addition, maintaining an appropriate amount of eye contact that is considered respectful in the patient's culture may demonstrate the doctor's interest in the patient. In addition to these helpful interview techniques, there is more to the teaching of verbal mirroring. It is important for the learner to understand the difference between paraphrasing and verbal mirroring.

Paraphrasing involves ing and summarizing the patient's words and, therefore, it risks distorting what the patient says. Verbal mirroring occurs when the physician approximates the patient's voice tone and repeats the patient's last few words or word and occasionally uses a slight questioning inflection.

This mirroring process avoids distorting the patient's words and encourages the patient to say more. The usefulness of verbal mirroring can be demonstrated by considering how a physician interviews a patient who presents with a cough.

An interview in which the physician simply nods his/her head or states "Okay" may go as follows:

Doctor: Do you have any major medical problems?

Patient: No, I'm pretty healthy.

Doctor: Okay. (and/or head nod) Ever have any surgeries?

Patient: Never.

Doctor: Okay. (and/or head nod) Do you have any allergies to medicine?

Patient: Not that I know of.

Doctor: Okay. (and/or head nod). Do you smoke any cigarettes?

Patient: Oh, my goodness, no. Never.

Doctor: Okay. (and/or head nod). Do you drink any alcohol?

The patient sees the same slight head nods and hears the same “Okay” to questions about allergies, smoking, and alcohol use. Up to this point, the doctor may appear more interested in going through a standard list of questions than in understanding the patient’s real concern. Now assume this doctor uses physical and verbal mirroring with a questioning inflection of his/her voice tone. This encounter may go as follows:

Doctor: Do you have any major medical problems?

Patient: No, I’m pretty healthy.

Doctor: You’re pretty healthy. (pause) Ever have any surgeries?

Patient: No . . . never.

Doctor: Never? (pause) Do you have any allergies to medicine?

Patient: None that I know of.

Doctor: None. (pause) Do you smoke any cigarettes?

Patient: Oh, my goodness, no. Never.

Doctor: Never? (pause)

Patient: Never. My father was just diagnosed with lung cancer, and he smoked all his life.

This is an example of how mirroring can lead to better rapport and more-effective communication with the patient. When the patient says, “Oh, my goodness, no. Never,” the doctor has no idea why the word “never” was used. By physically mirroring and then saying the word “never” and pausing, it reminds the patient of the emotion underlying him/her to say “never.” This creates an opportunity for the patient to explain if the “never” was significant. When the patient elaborates by disclosing his/her father’s diagnosis of lung cancer, the interview becomes infinitely more productive.

Conclusions

Office-based teachers can easily teach learners to include physical and verbal mirroring techniques in their patient encounters since it requires only a slight adjustment on the part of the physician. Although patients may give benign answers for many questions, the use of this approach will enable the learner to discover information and emotions that are critical to patients’ care. As a result, learners may build better rapport with their patients, and this is the bedrock on which effective physician-patient communication is built.

Watch What You Don't Say!

by Patricia Ball, CSP, CPAE

In recent years, there has been a dispute surrounding the veracity of the Albert Mehrabian studies that suggest that fifty-five percent of our communication is visual, thirty-eight percent how we say what we say, and seven percent the words only. However, if you take into consideration everything connected to a person visually, as well as their vocal nuances, most would agree that nonverbal communication is a powerful tool indeed. Understanding how to "read" other people and how to make correct counter moves will help you to create a desired outcome.

If you are unaware of what's happening and how to respond, you can muddle the communications and miss a straight talk opportunity. There are three major categories of nonverbal communication:

1. PARALANGUAGE or the vocal part of speech and its nuances,
2. KINESICS or the study of the body's physical movements, and
3. PROXEMICS or a person's perception of space.

For this article, we will explore only one of these categories, kinesics. I can't promise you that understanding body language or kinesics will make you rich, sexy or charming, but I guarantee you that correctly reading silent signals will make you a better communicator and a more understanding human being. However, be aware that while some body language is clearly understandable, there are many gray areas where there could be several interpretations.

You cannot not communicate. Each of us is a transmitter that can't be shut off. We are all constantly sending nonverbal clues. This fact means there is a constant source of information available about ourselves and other people. If you can detect these signals, you'll be more aware of how others think and feel, and you'll be better able to respond to their behavior. According to legend, President Roosevelt, a firm believer in nonverbal communication, decided to have some fun one evening. Each person came up and shook hands with him and said, *"Good evening, Mr. President, and how are you, sir?"* He responded warmly with a pleasant smile and a firm handshake, *"I'm fine, thank you, I just murdered my mother-in-law."* Not one person reacted to his comment! It's doubtful they even heard it. People believe body language even when the words contradict it. Because body language is unconscious for the most part, it's the most honest form of communication we use.

Body language transmits feelings; verbal communication transmits words and thoughts. At times understanding the wants and feelings of others is far more important than understanding their words. For example, did you know that the pupils of our eyes communicate? When we are excited or particularly interested in something, the pupils of our eyes increase in size. A good salesperson can increase profits by being aware of pupil dilation!

Edward Hall, a teacher of nonverbal communication, tells of being in a Middle East bazaar where he noted that an Arab merchant insisted that a customer buy a piece of

jewelry to which the shopper had been paying very little attention. However, the vendor had been watching the pupils of the buyer's eyes, had noticed them becoming larger on seeing a particular bracelet and had known which piece of jewelry the buyer really wanted. The customer bought the bracelet! People don't usually pay attention to body language until a speaker and his/her body start sending different messages. One of the strongest power signals you can use is to be consistently congruent with your body language cues and what you are saying.

- Posture communicates emotion. Actors are taught that there are two body postures: rising/approaching and sinking/withdrawing. Rising energy is reflected in a lift of the body, ebbing energy in a drooping body. Upward movement is associated with life: a growing plant, a young child, a person of vigor. Downward movement is related to death, the sick, the weary, the discouraged. This fundamental rising/sinking action is usually motivated by our inner feelings and emotions. However, it's possible to change an inner feeling by changing our outward bodily appearance. On a day when you're feeling depressed, put a spring in your gait, quicken your step, lift your stomach, chest and rib cage, hold your head erect and smile. This positive physical action will most likely help you feel less dejected. Excellent posture suggests power. Even from a wheelchair, President Roosevelt projected power with his erect carriage and jutting chin. Generally speaking, people who walk rapidly and swing their arms freely tend to be goal-oriented. When people habitually walk with hands in pockets, they tend to be critical and secretive. When people feel depressed, they shuffle along with their hands in their pockets and seldom look where they are going, making it difficult for them to be goal-oriented. Stooped or bowed shoulders usually mean something negative. One could be afraid, submissive, guilty or self-conscious. Raised shoulders denote fear or tension. Squared shoulders suggest strength or responsibility. When two people adopt similar sitting positions, mirror images, the nonverbal message communicates harmony and agreement. The nonverbal statement is, *"I think like you"* or *"I'm with you."* Any abrupt postural shift during the encounter means that the communication flow has altered and a change in thinking has occurred.

Leaning forward shows intensity, interest in the other person and confidence in yourself. This is a particularly important nonverbal cue for straight talk.

- Gestures are fascinating and have many different meanings depending on the circumstances surrounding the situation. It is unwise to base a decision on a person's personality by interpreting just one of his or her gestures. The hand-to-hairline gesture often means *"you're getting in my hair"* or *"I'm getting hot under the collar!"*

As you can see, many phrases in the English language are associated with body-language situations. However, the hand-to-hairline gesture can also represent a flirtatious, preening signal, a nervous gesture or a self-repair sign. It is only when a number of gestures fit together that a complete picture evolves. Gestures are often lumped together in what is called clusters. Each gesture is like a word in a language. It's only when those words fit together to form sentences that accurate interpretations can be made. The hand gesture is the basic form of human expression and a true index of the mind. Hand-gesture meanings vary tremendously from culture to culture. One American salesperson traveling in a distant land used the *"thumb-touching-index-finger"* sign known in the United States to mean *"Everything is O.K.!"* He was in for a surprise. In that country this particular signal had an obscene meaning.

Here are a few other gestures and their usual meanings. Resting your hand on your chin suggests contemplation. A common sign of anxiety is hand-wringing, as in the diagram titled MEEKNESS - ANXIETY. The well-known character Uriah Heep from Dickens' David Copperfield shows meekness with this gesture. Making a steeple of your fingers communicates confidence — even smugness, egotism or pride. Many authority figures like doctors, managers and religious leaders use the steepling gesture. Clapping your hands behind your head also suggests authority. Again, this gesture is seen frequently in managers and bosses. Hands on hips with feet spread apart indicates defiance or aggression. It also can be seen by someone making a power play. The movement most readily associated with sincerity and openness is open hands. Straight talkers use this gesture frequently. People often assume that crossing your arms in front of your chest is a defensive gesture. It often is . . . but it can have many other meanings. Making a judgment based on a single gesture can be hazardous. Standing with the arms crossed is more comfortable than many other attitudes. It can mean "I'm cold!" and that the person is trying to hold in warmth. It can be an attempt to respect another's personal space.

Beware of judging anyone's movements based on a single gesture. Look for clusters of gestures when reading body language.

- Handshaking is an art. According to C. A. Bartol in a nineteenth century sermon, *The Rising Faith*, "There is a hand that hath not heart in it; there is a claw or paw, a flipper or fin, a bit of wet cloth to take hold of, a piece of unbaked dough, a cold clammy thing we recoil from or greedily clutch with the heat of sin, which we drop as a burning coal." A person who extends only the four fingers of the hand to be shaken is often reticent and standoffish. Then there is the handshake in which the other person's hand is on top, palm down, forcing you to turn your palm upwards. The person on top has a very dominant handshake; he or she may be out for your job — or your wife or husband. On the other hand, if the dominant position handshaker is a woman, it might simply be a feminine gesture left over from the days when a man kissed a woman's extended hand. The handshake in which the shaker envelopes both of your hands with both of his or hers is known as the politician's shake. It is meant to show warmth and friendliness. It can be sincere or convey great insincerity. Only further in-depth observation will tell the truth.

Be careful about judging someone based on their flaccid, dead-fish handshake. There may be mitigating circumstances. Maybe he has arthritis. Perhaps she is an athlete or very strong person who is concerned about hurting your hand. Musicians, surgeons and artists may be protective of their hands. As a rule, match the pressure used by the other handshaker. Also, as you shake hands with someone, look into her eyes and try to remember their color. This direct eye contact occurring simultaneously with the handshake communicates an honest desire to meet the person. A proper handshake can make a person much more willing to listen to you. Learn all the nuances of this powerful straight talk tool.

- Facial Expressions are important tools for straight talk. When trying to persuade someone, pay particular attention to his or her eyes. Casting a glance upward and rapidly blinking eyelids can mean the person is considering your proposition seriously. If he looks you straight in the eye in a pleasant manner without trying to stare you down, then he is most probably interested. If the person refuses to look at you directly or drops

her eyes, hence the expression shifty-eyed, beware — it is possible they will be shifty in their verbal communications as well. Of course, they may be shy or hard of hearing — there could be any number of other explanations. Make judgments only after observing a number of nonverbal clues that all point in the same direction.

Body language varies greatly from culture to culture. In many cultures direct eye contact is offensive; it is often read as a sign of respect to drop one's eyes. Take all of this into consideration when making judgments based on nonverbal cues. When a person is trying to remember something, she will raise her brows, as if trying to see it. When an individual rejects an idea, he will close his eyes. Once the idea is accepted or understood, the head will nod affirmatively and then the eyes will open wide.

- Smiling is one of the most universally-understood pieces of body language. A smile usually says, "*I like you.*" A smile can be a wonderful source of communication, or it can be a mask that prevents communication. If someone smiles in response to any and every occasion, that smile is likely a mask that hides true feelings and gives that person a chance to collect her thoughts and gain control. Smile when pleased, not to please. Smiling inappropriately or continuously can result in not being taken seriously.

- Head tilting can be significant. Rotating your head upward can be an attempt to claim superiority. Rotating your head downward suggests submission or "*hanging your head in shame.*" Tilting your head away during a discussion can indicate disagreement. Tilting your head toward the speaker communicates careful attention and thus agreement.

POWER POINT PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION PLANNING - DRAW A LOGIC TREE

StrategicCommunications.com

The first step in preparing a successful presentation for decision makers is to draw a picture of it - that is, develop your ideas as a "logic tree."

In constructing a logic tree, a presenter starts with the main idea, the one thing that he or she wants the decision makers to remember or do. See *Fig. 1*.

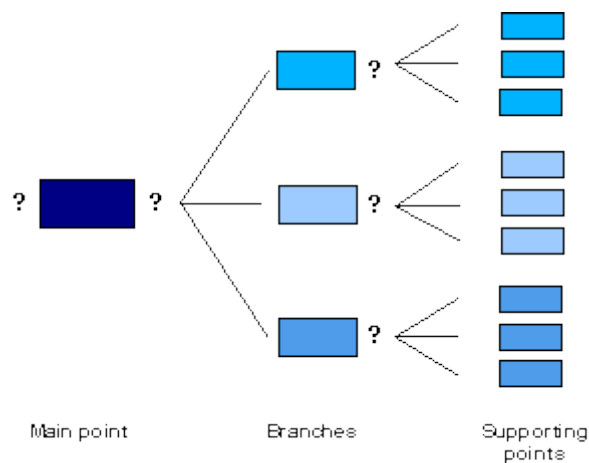


Fig. 1: The logic tree

If you think you have more than one main point or you want to 'talk about' a topic, you need to step back and decide what your message is. Or you may need to make several presentations to convey each idea separately.

After choosing the main idea, the presenter writes the major points that support that idea on the "branches" of the logic tree. The supporting points should answer the question that decision makers ask when they hear the main idea.

Assume, for example, that the main idea is "We should buy the Kumquat spreadsheet program." The branches of the logic tree should contain the reasons for that recommendation. See *Fig. 2*. In a persuasive presentation, these reasons are based on the decision makers' criteria (the standards used in making a decision).

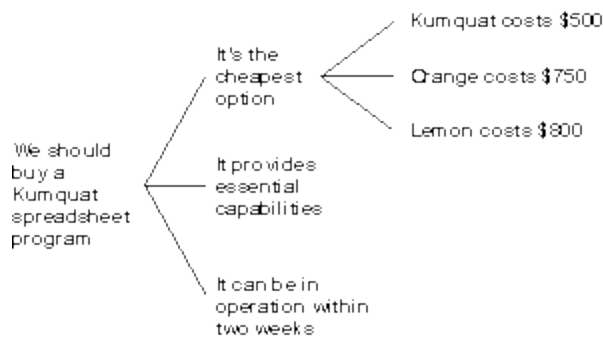


Fig. 2: Example of a useful logic tree

If, on the other hand, the main idea is a procedure, then the branches should contain the series of steps in that procedure.

Each branch or supporting point, in turn, may have further supporting statements that appear as "twigs."

The Category Trap

When first constructing a logic tree, a presenter is likely to fall into the old habit of developing a topical outline, which many of us learned in eighth-grade English.

In a topical outline, a presenter lists ideas by category or sequence, typically with an introduction and conclusion. This approach often results in "talking about" a topic rather than telling decision makers what they need to know.

The logic tree forces a presenter to focus on the decision makers' concerns and carefully determine what supporting data the audience needs. (Each branch of the tree should address one of the decision makers' concerns; in the example above, the first branch addresses concerns regarding cost.)

Ultimately, the logic tree can save the presenter time because it focuses one's thinking, reduces the tendency to procrastinate, and allows one to move ideas around easily to accommodate last-minute changes.

From Tree to Presentation

After organizing a presentation in a logic tree, the presenter creates a riveting beginning, a punchy ending, and relevant visuals.

For the actual delivery, the logic tree gives the presenter a clear picture of how ideas relate to each other. If at any time, decision makers indicate either verbally or with body language that they agree with a point, the presenter can cut the supporting details and move on.

Checklist for a Logic Tree

- Is the main point the one thing you want the audience to do or remember?
- Are the branches independent of each other? (Repeating words may indicate redundancy.)
- Do all the branches answer the same question in the audience's mind - are they all reasons, steps, criteria, or parts of the whole?
- Is each statement fully supported?
- Are all the statements written as complete thoughts?

There are a number of principles that should be considered when organising an investor presentation and its communication:

Prior to the event

- Notification – the website should be used to let people know about forthcoming events. This could include financial calendars and home page hotspots (areas available to highlight key information).
- Really simple syndication (RSS) alerts and email sign-up facility – provide investors with the ability to register to receive RSS and email alerts when presentations are announced or uploaded to the website.

Day of presentation

- Update the website's hotspots to say the presentation is available online and link through to a web page which holds all the related information.
- Email the subscription list to let them know the presentation is available and provide a direct link to the related information.
- Upload the information as soon as it is available. For example if a press release is sent to the stock exchange at 7am it should be available online at 7am too.
- Provide the direct URL (web address) to the presentation on all associated information such as press releases so that investors can easily find the information.
- Provide information online in both HTML and PDF.
- Information available – the amount of related information may differ depending on the type of presentation but it is likely to include the following:
 - press release – in HTML and PDF (if it is a long press release such as prelim results announcement it may only be possible to provide the first few pages in HTML initially – the full detail should be uploaded as soon as it is available);
 - PowerPoint presentation – in HTML and PDF. The HTML version should enable slides to

be enlarged to allow for easier reading of tables and graphs, and have forward and back buttons and a navigable index to allow for easy access to slides of particular interest;

- w ebcast – live and archived w ith Q&As. This can be either audio only or audio and video;
- if you have an audio w ebcast you could consider podcasting events – allow investors to dow nload audio files to their desktop or MP3 players;
- investor packs/briefings; and
- videos of interviews w ith senior managers.

- In addition to the presentation pages, other areas of the w ebsite may also need updating to ensure a consistent message and that correct information is available. This may include financial information, key facts, company profiles and strategy information.

After the event

It may not be possible to provide all information on the day of the event due to time constraints. Any related information should be available as soon as possible. This may include the following:

- full HTML of interim or prelim reports;
- transcript of presentation;
- transcript of conference call; and
- indexed Q&As of w ebcasts.

Archive the presentation (for interim and prelim presentations it is advised that the archive is kept for at least five years in-line w ith the time frame for financial statements).

Accessibility

Online information should be accessible. This means it must be designed to allow equal access to information and services to all users, including those w ith visual, hearing, cognitive and motor impairments. Users should be able to control a number of features including the size of the text, layout and navigation. Where possible information should be available in a variety of formats for example a transcript should be made available alongside a w ebcast, or the data sheets behind graphs/charts available for 'reading' softw are for visually impaired users.

TEN COMMANDMENTS OF CLIENT PRESENTATIONS

Published May 1991 in Consultants News

1. Tell a story.

You do your research in categories, i.e. competition, the market... But the client will understand more quickly if you organize the information to support your overall message.

2. Present only what the client needs to make a decision.

Don't inundate the client with data just to prove you've done your homework. Put backup slides in the report you leave behind.

3. Be flexible.

Even when you've pared to the bone, the client may not need to see every slide or march along with you in order. If interest flags, move on. If he's ready for closure, do so. Adjusting in midstream proves you are responsive as well as confident.

4. Never overestimate eyesight.

If the client can't read the slide, she certainly won't get the message. Slides should support the spoken message, not be the message.

5. Don't tell what it is; show what it means.

Create conceptual visuals to illustrate major relationships; use message heads on graphs and charts; explain the graphic in terms of the story, not the axis.

6. Deliver; don't read.

The last time someone deliberately read to you, it was your mother, and she was trying to put you to sleep. A comatose client cannot be a happy client.

7. Look and listen.

Most of the content of any communication is nonverbal. Body language, facial expressions and tone of voice may reveal far more than the client's actual words. When you sense hesitancy, probe until you know what is on the client's mind and have responded. Too often we are so busy talking we take the absence of outright hostility as acceptance.

8. Act like a professional.

Your body language counts, too. Maintain an "up" posture; use open hand gestures (with elbows away from the body), look directly at the client and show him (through facial expressions, voice, energy) that you feel confident and positive.

9. Be a person.

Too many of us become abstract and machine-like when presenting. Use a conversational tone and spoken (not written) language. Smile when appropriate and let your natural sense of humor come through.

10. Plan ahead.

Consider whether one additional day of analysis is worth the potentially devastating impact of sloppy slides and uncoordinated delivery that can result from handing your partner transparencies warm from the copying machine on the way to the airport, or discussing who will play what role in the taxi on the way to the client's office.

How to Lose an Audience in 10 Easy Ways:

Welcome to *Bad Presentation Techniques 101*. We have all sat through one -- the bad presentation. Are there really any bad presentation techniques or just bad presenters, such as...

- the reader
- the unprepared
- the mumbler
- and the ever popular [animation](#) wizard

Have **you** ever experienced any of these scenarios while sitting through a presentation?

1) I Thought You Were Bringing the Extra Lightbulb:

The audience is settled. You are all set to start your presentation and - guess what? The projector doesn't work. You didn't bother to check it out earlier.

Corrected Presentation Technique #1

Check all the equipment and rehearse your presentation, using *this* projector long before your time to present. Carry an extra projector bulb. If possible, check the lighting in the room you will be presenting in, prior to your time in the limelight. Make sure you know how to dim the lights if the room is too bright.

2) Information Underload:

You memorized the content (and it shows, by the way). Someone has a question. Panic sets in. You never prepared for questions and all you know about this topic is what is written on the slides.

Corrected Presentation Technique #2

Know your material *so well*, that you could easily do the presentation without an electronic enhancement such as PowerPoint. Use key words and phrases and include only essential information to keep the audience focused and interested. Be prepared for questions and know the answers.

3) What's It All About, Alfie?:

This is the opposite of *Information Underload*. You know *so much* about the topic, that you jump from here to there and back again talking about everything there is to know about your brand new widget, and no one can follow the thread of the presentation.

Corrected Presentation Technique #3

Use the K.I.S.S. principle (Keep It Silly Simple) when designing a presentation. Stick to three, or at the most, four points about your topic and expound on them. The audience will be more likely to retain the information.

4) This is Not a Book Club:

An audience member says that she can't read the slides. You graciously tell her you will be reading them and proceed to do so, while looking up at the screen. Each of your slides is filled with the text of your speech. Why do they need you?

Corrected Presentation Technique #4

Simplify the content, keeping the most important information near the top of the slide for easy reading in the back rows. Focus on one topic area and use no more than four [bullets](#) per slide. **Speak to the audience**, not to the screen.

5) When You Don't Have Content, Dazzle Them With Complicated Diagrams:

You figured no one will notice that you didn't do much research on your topic if you add lots of photos and complicated looking graphs.

Corrected Presentation Technique #

"Time is Money" is really true in today's world. No one wants to waste their time sitting through a presentation with no substance. Use [photos, charts and diagrams](#) *only* to illustrate key points of your presentation. They add a nice break to the material, and when used correctly, can only enhance your oral presentation.

6) Did You Bring Your Magnifying Glasses, Martha?:

Small, script type fonts might look great when you are sitting 18 inches away from the monitor. You didn't consider the lady sitting 200 feet away from the screen who can't read them.

Corrected Presentation Technique #6

Stick to [easy to read fonts](#) such as Arial or Times New Roman. Avoid script type fonts which are hard to read on screen. Use no more than two different fonts – one for headings another for content and no less than a 30 pt font so that people at the back of the room can read them easily.

7) Divine Design:

You heard blue was a good color for a [design template](#) or [design theme](#). You found a really cool template on the internet, with a beach scene. Water is blue, right? Unfortunately, your presentation is about some nifty new tools to show at a Woodcarvers' convention.

Corrected Presentation Technique #7

Choose a design template that is appropriate for the audience. A clean, straightforward layout is best for [business presentations](#). Young children respond to presentations that are full of color and contain a variety of shapes.

8) Yawn -- HOW Many More Slides Are There?:

Your vacation cruise was so fantastic that you took 500 photos, and put them all in a [digital photo album](#) to impress your friends. After the first 100 slides, snores were heard in the room.

Corrected Presentation Technique #8

Ensure your audience stays focused by keeping the number of slides to a minimum. 10 to 12 is plenty. Some concessions can be made for a photo album, since most pictures will be on screen for only a short time. Be kind though. Think how much *you* enjoy everyone else's vacation pictures!

9) Oh No! Now I Have a Crick in My Neck!:

You found all the really cool [animations](#) and sounds and used 85% of them in your presentation, to impress everyone with your flair. Except -- the audience doesn't know where to look, and have totally lost the message of your presentation.

Corrected Presentation Technique #9

Animations and sounds, used well, can heighten interest, but don't distract the audience with too much of a good thing. Design your presentation with the "less is more" philosophy. Don't let your audience suffer from animation overload.

10) Save the Christmas Colors for Holiday Parties

You love unusual color combinations together. Your PowerPoint presentation is not the time to use them. An orange and blue combination is unsettling to an audience and there may be people present who cannot see red and green due to color blindness.

Corrected Presentation Technique #10

Use good contrast with the background to make your text easy to read.

- Dark text on a light background is best, but avoid white backgrounds -- tone it down by using beige or another light color that will be easy on the eyes. Dark backgrounds are very effective, but be sure to make text a light color for easy reading.
- Patterned or textured backgrounds make text hard to read.
- Keep the color scheme consistent.

The Bottom Line

To be a good presenter you need to be engaging with the audience and know your topic. Keep the presentation concise and include only relevant information. Use an electronic enhancement, such as PowerPoint, as an *accompaniment* to your presentation to reinforce your point, not as a crutch. Remember -- your [slide show](#) is not the presentation -- you are the presentation.

10 Tips on Becoming a Better Presenter

Improve Your Presentation Skills and Be a Better Presenter

By [Wendy Russell](#), About.com

1. Know Your Stuff

Your comfort level with presenting will be high if you know everything about your topic. After all, the audience is looking to you to be the expert. However, don't overload the audience with your complete toolkit of knowledge about your topic. Three key points is just about right to keep them interested, allowing them to ask questions if they want more.

2. Make it Clear What You are There to Share With Them

Use the tried and true method that skilled presenters have used for eons.

1. Tell them what you are going to tell them.
 - Outline briefly the key points you will talk about.
2. Tell them.
 - Cover the topic in depth.
3. Tell them what you told them.
 - Summarize your presentation in a few short sentences.

3. A Picture Tells the Story

Keep the audience's attention with pictures rather than endless bulleted slides. Often one effective picture says it all. There is a reason for that old cliché - *"a picture is worth a thousand words"*.

4. You Can't Have Too Many Rehearsals

If you were an actor, you would not be performing without first rehearsing your part. Your presentation should be no different. It is a show too, so take time to rehearse -- and preferably in front of people -- so that you can see what works and what doesn't. An added bonus of rehearsing is that you will become more comfortable with your material and the live show will not come off as a recitation of facts.

5. Practice in the Room

What works while rehearsing at home or the office, may not come off the same in the actual room where you will present. If at all possible, arrive early enough so that you can become familiar with the room setup. Sit in the seats as if you were an audience member. This will make

it easier for you to judge where to walk about and stand during your time in the spotlight. And -- don't forget to test out your equipment in this room long before it's show time. Electrical outlets may be scarce, so you may need to bring extra extension cords. And -- you brought an extra projector light bulb, right?

6. Podiums are Not for Professionals

Podiums are "crutches" for novice presenters. To be engaging with your audience you have to be free to walk among them if you can, or at least vary your position on stage, so that you will appear to be approachable to everyone in the room. Use a remote device so that you can change slides easily on the screen without having to be stuck behind a computer.

7. Speak to the Audience

How many presentations have you witnessed where the presenter either read from his notes or worse -- read the slides to you? The audience doesn't need you to read to them. They came to see and hear you speak to them. Your [slide show](#) is just a visual aid.

8. Pace the Presentation

A good presenter will know how to pace his presentation, so that it flows smoothly, while at the same time he is prepared for questions at any time -- and -- going back to Item 1, of course, he knows all the answers. Make sure to allow for audience participation at the end. If no one asks a question, have a few quick questions of your own ready to ask them. This is another way to engage the audience.

9. Learn to Navigate

If you are using PowerPoint as a visual aid to your presentation, get to know the many keyboard shortcuts that allow you to quickly navigate to different slides in your presentation if the audience asks for clarity. For example, you may wish to revisit slide 6, which contains a wonderful picture illustrating your point.

10. Always Have a Plan B

Unexpected things happen. Be prepared for any disaster. What if your projector blew a light bulb (and you forgot to bring a spare) or your briefcase was lost at the airport? Your Plan B should be that the show must go on, no matter what. Going back to Item 1 once again -- you should know your topic **so well** that you can make your presentation "off the cuff" if need be, and the audience will leave feeling that they got what they came for.

DEALING WITH PRESENTATION DISASTERS

Most presentation disasters are not fatal; they can be resolved comfortably if you

1. Keep smiling
2. Know exactly what you want the decision maker to do (your main point)

What do you do if...

The decision maker is forced to leave before you have gotten to your key points.

If you follow the old rule "Tell 'em what you are going to tell 'em, tell 'em, tell 'em what you told 'em," you won't get caught this way. Always mention your main point and major supporting points within the first few minutes of any presentation. If you are using visuals, you always have a visual that has the main point and the key points. If, however, you have made the fatal error of trying to save the "zinger" for last, and the decision maker must leave, ask for a moment to summarize (anyone will give you a moment if you ask with a smile) and state, in one sentence, the one point you want the decision maker to remember and, if you have a chance, the two concepts that best support that point.

You arrive and are told the decision maker can't attend.

Even if the decision maker can't make it, someone in the room will be responsible for reporting to him or her. Ask yourself, "what, in one sentence, do I want the reporter to say?" (What do I want the decision maker to do?). (It will not be, "He told us about" It will be a message, "we should use _____ because it is within our budget and meets our engineering requirements" for example) Then be sure you state that sentence, as you want it repeated, at the beginning and at the end of your presentation.

You find you have 15 minutes instead of the 45 you planned on.

Talking fast won't work. Decide quickly what percentage of 15 minutes each part of your presentation should take. Keep your eye on your watch and limit yourself to the key concept in each portion. Next time, be prepared. Think about what you'll leave out if your time is halved, if you are given 5 minutes.

Someone asks a question about an issue you plan to discuss in detail later.

Answer the question briefly, and say you plan to go into detail later. If person asking the question is the decision maker, ask if the short answer is sufficient for now. Do not ask people to wait until you reach the point at which you originally planned to cover the material. If you do, everyone will focus on the unanswered question instead of listening. And, in a meeting setting, do not ask people to hold their questions until the end. Making that request suggests you are not confident enough to deal with interruptions.

You lose your train of thought mid-sentence.

Smile, say "excuse me" and start again. Keep in mind that everyone in the room has lost track of an idea at least once. People want you to succeed and are sympathetic. Keep smiling.

You plan to work through a handout page by page; people are moving ahead at their own pace.

The risk in giving people printed material is that they will read it at their own pace. If at all possible, don't provide handouts until after the presentation is over. If you must walk through a printed booklet, tell people what it contains and give them a rough idea of where different parts are located before you begin. If possible, hold your copy up as an easel and point to parts of charts or graphs. People are also more likely to stay with you if you occasionally say, "And you can see on page ___ that..." If the decision maker insists on moving ahead quickly, you'll do best to pick up the pace, perhaps skip pages, and, if necessary, focus on the pages that are important to her. (If you are going to hand out materials, don't try to bury anything at the end - like cost or fees. If people don't find what they want at the beginning, they go immediately to the end.)

You are competing for a deal and realize that the decision maker has confused you with the competition (he is taking notes on a page with the competition's name on the top).

Use the name of your firm as often as you can. Say, for example, "As we at _____ believe," and try not to focus on what he is writing.

You expect to speak to 3 people and arrive to find 20.

If you were planning to work from one set of handouts, forget it. Ask for a flipchart and pens; decide quickly how much you can rough sketch as you talk (key points, if nothing else). Stand; it is easier to maintain control. Remember that you are the expert. Keep smiling.

You walk into the decision maker's office and are offered a seat in a deep sofa.

This is the moment to develop a bad back; ask for a hard chair. It is virtually impossible to sound confident and in control from of a cushion 6 inches off the floor.

Your throat dries out.

Do what the theater folk do. Roll a tiny piece of paper into a small ball and place it between your gum and your facial tissue in the back of your mouth. It will stimulate the flow of saliva just like the wad of cotton the dentist uses. Try this in private first, however, so you are sure you are comfortable.

Several people start a side conversation while you are speaking.

In the following order: Ask if there are questions. Ask if you can do anything to clarify. If they will not stop and you are standing, continue your presentation but try to move nearer to them. Lower your voice or pause. Hope that someone else will stop them. When all else fails, try to acknowledge that things are out of control and ask the group whether a new meeting should be scheduled.

You want to make professional overheads but all you have is a word processor and a copying machine.

If your copying machine will enlarge, you are in good shape. Type your text, in bold, on a page. Turn the page sideways in the copying machine (so the text is horizontal rather than vertical on the page, and enlarge the text.) As an alternative, consider doing the acetates by hand if you can print clearly.

You drop your overheads on the floor.

Make a joke about your clumsiness, pick them up and take a few moments to put them in order. (Now is the time to be grateful you have numbered them.)

You come prepared with overheads to find you have a podium in the middle of a long conference table and someone else is assigned to handle the overheads.

Say politely that you would rather handle your own acetates and you don't like being confined. Ask briefly if you can present from the end of the table. (Keep smiling.) If the answer is "NO" set up a hand-cuing system with the overhead operator and, if at all possible, rehearse. The moral of the story is, ask about arrangements in advance.

MANAGING MEDIA

Mandatory Reading: Theaker, Chapter 3: *Public Relations, Politics and the Media*; Chapter 10: *Media Relations*

Media

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia: Journalism

[_]Print

A [story](#) is a single article, [news](#) item or [feature](#), usually concerning a single [event](#), issue, [theme](#), or [profile](#) of a person. *Correspondents* report news occurring in the main, locally, from their own country, or from foreign cities where they are stationed.

Most reporters *file* information or write their stories electronically from remote locations. In many cases, *breaking stories* are written by staff members, through information collected and submitted by other reporters who are out on the field gathering information for an event that has just occurred and needs to be broadcast instantly. Radio and television reporters often compose stories and report "live" from the scene. Some journalists also interpret the news or offer opinions and analysis to readers, viewers, or listeners. In this role, they are called commentators or columnists.

Reporters take notes and also take photographs or shoot videos, either on their own, or through a [photographer](#) or camera person. In the second phase, they organize the material, determine the focus or emphasis (identify the peg), and finally write their stories. The story is then [ed](#) by news or copy-editors, who function from the *news desk*. The headline of the story is decided by the news desk, and practically never by the reporter or the writer of the piece. Often, the news desk also heavily re-writes or changes the style and tone of the first draft prepared by the reporter / writer originally. Finally, a collection of stories that have been picked for the newspaper or magazine *ion*, are laid out on dummy (trial) pages, and after the *chief editor* has approved the content, style and language in the material, it is sent for [publishing](#). The writer is given *abyline* for the piece that is published; his or her name appears alongside the article. This process takes place according to the frequency of the publication. News can be published in a variety of formats ([broadsheet](#), [tabloid](#), [magazine](#) and periodical publications) as well as periods (daily, weekly, semi-weekly, fortnightly or monthly).

[_]Television

In a broadcast system (television), journalists or reporters are also involved with [ing](#) the video material that has been shot alongside their research, and in working on the visual [narrative](#) of the story. Broadcast journalists often make an appearance in the news story at the beginning or end of the video clip.

In [television](#) or [broadcast journalism](#), news analysts (also called news-casters or news anchors) examine, interpret, and broadcast news received from various [sources](#) of information. *Anchors* present this as news, either videotaped or live, through transmissions from on-the-scene reporters (news correspondents).

News films ("clips") can vary in length; there are some which may be as long as ten minutes, others that need to fit in all the relevant information and material in two or three minutes. News channels these days have also begun to host special [documentary films](#) that stretch for much longer durations and are able to explore a news subject or issue in greater detail.

The desk persons categorise news stories with various formats according to the merit of the story. Such formats include AVO, AVO Byte, Pkg, VO SOT, VOX POP, and Ancho Visual.

- The AVO, or Anchor Voice Over, is the short form of news. The story is written in a gist. According to the script visual is aired. The anchor reads the news while the visual is broadcast simultaneously. Generally, the duration of an AVO is 30 to 40 seconds. The script is three to four lines. At first the anchor starts to read the news, and, after reading one or one-and-a-half lines, the visual is aired, overlapping the face of anchor.
- The AVO Byte has two parts: An AVO, and one or more bytes. This is the same as an AVO, except that as soon as the AVO ends, the Byte is aired.
- The Pkg has three parts: Anchor, Voice Over, and Sign Off. At first a Script is written. A voice over anchor reads the anchor or anchor intro part.

[_]News agencies

[News agencies](#), which are also known as wire services provide news to publications, broadcasters and media houses by the minute. Notable examples are [Agence France-Press](#), [Reuters](#) and the [Associated Press](#).

The financial problems facing the newspaper industry mean newspapers are generally more reliant on news agencies. According to The Economist, "a few struggling newspaper groups have stopped subscribing to newswires. Many others, having cut their own newsrooms, have become more dependent than ever on regurgitating agency copy."^[6]

The rise of news websites that lack staff to produce news, has also helped news agencies. According to Tom Curley, of Associated Press, in 2008 printed newspapers contributed only 25% of the company's revenues, a reduction from 55% in 1985."^[6]

[_]Internet

The [Internet](#) has allowed the formal and informal publication of news stories through mainstream media outlets as well as [blogs](#) and other [self-published](#) news stories. Journalists working on the Internet have been referred to as J-Bloggers, a term coined by Australian Media Academic Dr Nicola Goc to describe journalists who [blog] and [blog]gers who produce journalism. "J-Bloggers: Internet bloggers acting in the role of journalists disseminating newsworthy information, who subscribe to the journalistic ideals of an obligation to the truth and the public's right to know" (Media and Journalism: Theory to Practice (2008) Melbourne: OUP, p45) . The web has also seen the development of [Online Newspapers](#) and [Online magazine](#).

[_]Newscasters

Newscasters function at large stations and networks that usually specialize in a particular type of news, such as sports or weather. Weathercasters, also called weather reporters, report current and forecast weather conditions. They gather information from national satellite weather services, wire services, and local and regional weather bureaus. Some weathercasters are trained meteorologists and develop their own weather forecasts. Sportscasters select, write, and deliver sports news. This may include interviews with sports personalities and coverage of games and other sporting events.

[] Article topics and writing

Articles are written about topics that are considered notable by the editors of the publication, with notability varying depending on the focus and audience of the publisher. Large agencies or companies may have reporters that are specialized to discuss specific topics (a *beat*); smaller agencies are more likely to have a small number of reporters covering all areas of interest. [Investigative reports](#) may cover lengthy stories that require days or weeks to gather sufficient information. Articles must be produced to meet a limited [deadline](#) determined by the broadcast or print time of the specific publication and working hours may vary according to the deadlines set and depending on projects or last-minute developments may be long or irregular.

Reporting versus editorializing

Generally, publishers and consumers of journalism draw a distinction between reporting — "just the facts" — and opinion writing, often by restricting opinion columns to the editorial page and its facing or "op-ed" (opposite the editorials) page. Unsigned [editorials](#) are traditionally the official opinions of the paper's editorial board, while op-ed pages may be a mixture of syndicated columns and other contributions, frequently with some attempt to [balance](#) the voices across some political or social spectrum.

The distinction between reporting and opinion can break down. In the UK, the Press Complaints Commission states that "the Press, whilst free to be partisan, must distinguish clearly between comment, conjecture and fact"^[10] but some commentators have suggested there can sometimes be a blurring of opinion and fact.^[11] Complex stories often require summarizing and interpretation of facts, especially if there is limited time or space for a story. Stories involving great amounts of interpretation are often labelled "news analysis," but still run in a paper's news columns. The limited time for each story in a broadcast report rarely allows for such distinctions.

Who's Who in the Media?

From: American Legion Auxiliary, 2005, *Public Relations Handbook*, American Legion Auxiliary, Indianapolis, IN.

Media Contacts: The first crucial step in beginning a publicity program is to compile a well thought out list of media.

Daily Newspapers

City editor – Generally the individual who makes reporter assignments for local stories and edits the copy.

Reporter – Besides being told what stories to write, reporters have a responsibility to suggest stories. If you can convince a reporter that your story is important, you are ahead of the game.

editorial Page editor – An individual who works separately from the news writing side of the business. This individual helps develop editorial positions of the newspaper. (When you want to place a guest editorial written by your Unit President in a newspaper, this is where you will most likely be directed).

Op-Ed editor – An individual who selects the commentary and opinion pieces that appear on the page opposite the editorial page. (Sometimes a column written by your Unit President can be used as an oped piece).

Letters to the editor – Generally one individual in the editorial department handles the selection of letters. Most newspapers also have information on how to submit letters to the editor via mail, fax and e-mail. Never overlook the potential of a short, to-the-point letter reinforcing the positive community perception of our organization.

Weekly Newspapers

editor – Weekly papers have just a few staff members to handle all the jobs, so don't be surprised if the person who answers the phone is also the person you need to speak with. In the weekly newspaper business, the editor is a Jack or Jill of all trades.

Television Stations

Assignment editor – The person who is responsible for assigning reporters and photographers to cover a story.

Reporter – The person who talks with people and tries to find contacts to get the job done. Once you have been transferred from the assignment editor to a reporter, you can usually make future calls directly to the reporter.

Community Affairs Director – The individual who coordinates all the station's activities in the community. If you were looking to establish a partnership with a station for a special event, this is probably the person you will be told to contact.

Public Affairs Director – The individual who produces and often hosts station programs that tackle issues of interest to the public. If you have an event you want to promote, this is who you will most likely work with.

Radio Stations

News and Public Service Director – Unless you live in a major city, the individual hired as the news director is generally also doing the job of the public service director.

Promotion Director – The individual who coordinates appearances by on-air personalities at events and develops other projects to increase listener participation and awareness.

Continuity Director – The individual who schedules the time of all commercials. At smaller radio stations, this person may also schedule public service announcements.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

- Remember, talking to the top person in charge is seldom where you want to start. Don't try to figure out who to call; let the workers help you navigate job titles.
- Ask media contacts the best time of day to communicate. Media personnel are working with deadlines and have many demands on their time and attention.
- Every media contact should be thought of as an opportunity. Your personal relationship with the media reflects on your work. Treating the media with courtesy and mutual cooperation will win respect for the organization. Be a resource for the media.
- You will not always get the coverage you want, but always maintain a positive attitude and be patient!

Media Contact Tips:

Newspapers

Newspapers differ in their emphasis on news and features. In general, smaller daily and rural weekly newspapers are more receptive to smaller, local stories like the election of officers. Each newspaper will have a set of guidelines to inform you of:

- type of news allowed
- size requirements
- frequency
- content of photos
- deadlines
- name of editor

Your copy should be: typewritten, double-spaced.

Stories/photos current and newsworthy. Use your name and phone number as contact person.

Public opinion and letter columns: are used to promote programs/special events, i.e. patriotic holidays.

Advertising: Use for promoting special events. Keep your advertisements brief and specific. Consider graphics or large print for eye-catching appeal.

Periodicals

Various newsletters and small magazines in your area might publish the news or feature story you have to offer. Call or write these outlets to solicit their interest, i.e. promote scholarships in school newsletters.

Post/Unit publications provide an opportunity to promote upcoming events, meetings and activities. Use this space to stimulate interest, build excitement, and encourage member participation. This space should be used as a tool to promote your upcoming programs.

Radio

News and feature programs of about three minutes duration are quite popular. These broadcasts usually involve a brief interview with an authority on a particular subject and are often designed for automobile commuter audiences.

Some local radio stations may offer a calendar of daily events for notices of regular meetings or special events, such as fund raising projects, celebrations of patriotic holidays, or Poppy Day.

Television

Television news directors are looking for stories, but in addition, are seeking dramatic angles and personalities who have visual impact. If the visual possibilities of a story are good, the news can be of lesser importance. If a TV station is interested, they will tell you whether to bring your people to the studio or whether a reporter and camera crew will visit your event.

Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

Since radio and TV stations are licensed public airwaves, they devote some broadcast time to public service announcements and educational material without charge. Talk with the public service director about using this free time well in advance of your event. PSAs provide more detailed information and possibly will use visual props to promote an event.

Electronic bulletin boards are available for announcements. Submit written copy containing facts and dates with adequate advance notice to allow for computer programming.

Other Contacts

Contact Public Relations directors of service and civic organizations, colleges and universities, and local governments. These individuals can give you excellent advice, particularly regarding media contacts.

Be alert to available bulletin boards and other public display areas. Does your grocery store or Laundromat have a board on which you can put notices of your fund raisers or other local events? Remember to remove announcements after the event has been held.

What Exactly is News?

Getting Your News Into Print

Everyone likes to see and read about their Units' and Departments' activities in the local newspaper. You may be planning an event that needs the support of your local newspaper and/or media. This guide will give you the basics of dealing with your local newspapers and media so that you can get your news or views into print or broadcast.

Publicity Basics

It is often said, there are three rules of journalism:

1. Accuracy
2. Accuracy
3. Accuracy

What is News?

- ★ Accurate, unbiased, timely, factual
- ★ Proximity, impact, prominence, conflict, bizarre, current, diverse
- ★ The 5 Ws: (who, what, when, where, why)
- ★ Information with the specific intent to inform, entertain, or sell
- ★ Something entertaining to the audience and something they want to know
- ★ A report of a current happening which is presented through a mass medium and is representative of all social groups, that will catch the attention of the viewer and expose the truth
- ★ A way of communicating information to the public
- ★ A way to raise social consciousness by exposing the public to opinions on various issues and allowing them to form their own opinions
- ★ News provides information that can be practical for a person's daily life
- ★ News is anything that sparks curiosity

TIPS FOR PR PRACTITIONERS

1. Become a regular newspaper reader and observe writing styles.
2. Build a relationship with the newspaper staff, in particular, the writer assigned to cover your organization.
3. Submit only “fresh” news.
4. Use the 5 Ws of news reporting: who, what, when, where and why.
5. Use material that will be of interest to the general public.
6. Be accurate – check and recheck spelling, dates, locations and names.
7. Avoid technical terminology.
9. Learn and observe deadlines. This is critical in the case of weekly or biweekly publications.
10. Don’t nag. Present your case well and then leave it up to the press.
11. Criticize only in the case of serious error.
12. Take the time to say “thank you” and let the press know the results of their efforts to publicize your needs or programs. Be grateful for any “free” publicity you can get.
13. If “news” is only news to your membership, offer the information as a paid advertisement.
14. Consider a letter to the editor or a viewpoint column as a forum for discussing an issue of importance to the community.
15. Use photos
16. Feature stories
 - a. Small newspapers may accept your copy.
 - b. Daily newspapers generally write their own stories. If you feel you have a good story, don’t hesitate to contact either the regular staff writer or a feature writer. If the writer agrees to do a feature, prepare in advance a “fact sheet” giving all background information.
17. Only one person from your Unit/Department should be in touch with the local media. Even if you are the chairman of the Unit’s biggest event of the year, the person in your Unit responsible for publicity should be informed and make the media contact.
18. Get the story to the newspaper and local media no more than 24 hours after the event. Know the newspaper’s deadline. Whenever possible, let the newspaper reporter or editor know about an event before it takes place. Invite them as guests. Send complimentary tickets. Invite them to act as judges for essay contests.
19. Use creativity (to a certain degree). Newspaper editors appreciate fresh ideas.

- ★ Write tight and get to the point
- ★ Avoid vagueness
- ★ Don't be redundant
- ★ Write for your readers
- ★ Proofread, read aloud, and let it sit
- ★ Don't plagiarize
- ★ Story should answer the 5 Ws and H but not in one sentence
- ★ Try to use a single contact person to answer to the media.
- ★ Hold a press conference if necessary.
- ★ Always make positive statements about organization and programs.
- ★ Make it clear that any problem is of the utmost importance.
- ★ Have an action plan ready.
- ★ Know the media before you need to know them.
- ★ Be committed to open and honest communication.
- ★ Immediately notify emergency responders.
- ★ Don't immediately admit fault or try to spread blame.
- ★ Tell the facts as they develop. Rely on investigative sources for details.
- ★ Never say "no comment."
- ★ Issue a prepared statement to the media as soon as possible and follow –up.

Public Relations Tips During a Crisis

Try to use a single contact person to answer to the media.

- ★ Hold a press conference if necessary.
- ★ Always make positive statements about organization and programs.
- ★ Make it clear that any problem is of the utmost importance.
- ★ Have an action plan ready.
- ★ Know the media before you need to know them.
- ★ Be committed to open and honest communication.
- ★ Immediately notify emergency responders.
- ★ Don't immediately admit fault or try to spread blame.
- ★ Tell the facts as they develop. Rely on investigative sources for details.
- ★ Never say "no comment."
- ★ Issue a prepared statement to the media as soon as possible and follow –up.

Press kit

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A **press kit**, often referred to as a **media kit** in business environments, is a pre-packaged set of promotional materials of a person, company, or organization distributed to members of the [media](#) for [promotional](#) use.

Common press kit components

- Backgrounder with historical information on the company or individual
- Fact Sheet listing specific features, statistics, or benefits
- Biographies of key executives, individuals, artists, etc.
- Past Press Coverage
- [Photos](#) or other images (high resolution) of key executives, logos, products, etc.
- A [press release](#) detailing the current news the media kit is sent in reference to
- Media contact information (usually of a [public relations](#) department or spokesperson)
- A CD, DVD, Software title, video, etc. as appropriate for the sender of the release
- Collateral advertising material, such as: postcard, flyer, newspaper ad, etc.

Pitch to Media for Effective Public Relations

Winning Press Coverage with a Well-Researched Media Strategy

© [Shelley Aylesworth-Spink](#)

■ [May 22, 2009](#)

<http://www.Suite101.com>

Knowing how to pitch a story is becoming more important as marketing and communications budgets lean toward public relations campaigns that include [media relations](#).

Media Strategy Part of Effective Public Relations Campaigns

The value of good press coverage to an organization includes improved financial health, sales, positive interest and buzz. Securing good media reporting, however, takes careful planning, thinking like a journalist and tenacity. Each day, reporters receive hundreds of emails, phone calls, letters, packages and drop-in visitors, all trying to gain media coverage. The key is to shape a story for maximum media appeal, particularly during a public relations campaign.

Consider the following to create a [winning media pitch](#):

- Is this a new idea? Having a newsworthy angle is the first step.
- What is different about the idea and does it help the public?
- Does the pitch relate to a recent trend heavily covered by the media? Reporters are always seeking different angles on news stories when coverage is saturated by the competition.
 - Can the media pitch involve a big name? For example, actor Michael J. Fox's battle with Parkinson's creates a much higher profile for the disease and the organizations supporting research and care.
 - Can the pitch include a news angle of being at the extreme such as being the first, biggest, smallest or oldest?
 - Ensure the organization is comfortable with conflict because the media like to cover stories with two completely different perspectives.
 - Does the product or idea involve a solution to a well-known problem such as a health issue, household chore or financial issue?
 - Can a human touch be added to the pitch? Media are always searching for real examples of people's experiences.
- If the pitch is aimed at local media, try to relate a national news story to the community.
- Are photographs, visuals or a photo opportunity available for reporters?

Identify Which Media List You Need for a Media Pitch

Search media lists to research a media outlet's format, target audience, frequency and reporting style, and what beat a reporter covers. Read that reporter's articles and target the pitch specifically for that reporter. Heed reporter's deadlines. Weekly columnists have deadlines at the end of each work week so early in the week is the best time to both pitch and follow up on a story. Daily newspaper reporters tend to have afternoon deadlines so pitching a story early each morning is the best time.

Pitch the story using email. Keep the email brief, no more than two or three paragraphs, take on a conversational tone and simply describe why the story would benefit readers or viewers. Comment on a reporter's previous article as an introduction to the pitch.

Gaining Press Coverage Takes Solid Effort

Be persistent and polite. No response to the email within a complete working day should be followed up with a phone call. When on the telephone with a reporter, pitch the idea in 10 seconds, using a list of talking points to stay on topic during the conversation. Follow up a week later and try to find more enticing information to strengthen the pitch, such as a customer or other benefactor.

Make a pitch to media by creating a compelling news angle, finding the correct media outlet and reporter and respecting the media's deadlines, need for visuals and human interest. The results will be valuable media coverage that benefits an organization and those it serves.

How To Get Along With The Press

By Karen DePodwin

<http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P3-1540732131.html>

Recently, I attended a wedding where I was the only person who didn't work for a campaign or political organization. Worse, I'm a journalist—which meant by the end of the night, even the DJ was calling me "the enemy."

But the relationship between members of the media and politicians doesn't have to be so frustrating and cold. Here's how to warm up your media relations:

Don't Take It Personally. Like anyone else with a passion for their trade, staffers often get lost in the moment and take unflattering reports on their candidate as a personal hit. Similar to your tricky approach of answering questions with non-answers, we too are just doing our jobs; our editors just want the story and they want us to press you until we get it. As in any relationship, holding a grudge won't get you anywhere. When the bad news hits the web, TV or newsstands, do damage control and shake it off. If you've still got a chip on your shoulder the next time that reporter phones you, it won't come of well when her story reads: "We attempted to contact the representative's office, but our calls were not returned."

Don't Cry Wolf. More than once in a campaign, the press secretary puts out a release that might cause the media to expect the Dalai Lama to show up or a senator to admit to relations with a polar bear. Then we trek to the press conference, only to learn there's no real celebrity and no real news, just Penn Jillette announcing he's throwing his support behind your guy. The next time an announcement that warrants a breaking-news banner pops up, the press may think twice about how "urgent" your press conference really is. Side note: Only teenage girls and advertisers should be allowed to write with exclamation points.

Don't Run. In 2006, I was covering a New York congressional campaign. The incumbent, Republican Sue Kelly, was also the chairwoman of the page board during the Mark Foley page scandal. Every time I pressed, Kelly backed away as if she had something to hide—until finally the 70-year-old congresswoman literally took off running (in heels) to her car. The video hit YouTube, other stations picked it up, and the campaign began a downward spiral, from which it couldn't recover. From there on out, the worst mistake made by the campaign was ducking and hiding from the press. Every time I reported on the race, I had to say, "Our calls were not returned." Always have an exit strategy to exclude sprinting.

Karen DePodwin is a television report, New York.

IMAGE, IDENTITY AND BRANDING

Mandatory Reading: Theaker, Chapter 7: *Corporate Identity*

All in the Timing: A framework to manage the communication of brands by Ramón Ollé

www.iabc.com/cw

Communication World, January-February 2009; special report: europe & the middle east

Buying is complicated. We are not experts in most categories. We don't have time to be, and the information provided by experts is often contradictory.

Today's communication and branding experts are experiencing a fascinating moment in the history of the profession. Uncertain economic times have made it even more crucial for companies to distinguish themselves from the competition. Dramatic cultural changes have presented us with a consumer who is more critical of brands, where authenticity is an added value and innovation is the minimum requirement in order to compete. We are faced with much better-informed audiences, who have much more power to share information, compare prices and come together with others in increasingly efficient communities.

Additionally, a number of changes are taking place in the traditional disciplines of communication, from the long heralded death of the TV spot as a symbol of traditional advertising, to the unthinkable influence of blogs and their impact on public relations strategy. Likewise, relational marketing will never be the same again after the Internet, nor will events after experiential marketing, or even product placement after branded content.

With these changes in mind, a few years ago, a group of us who are marketing and communication professionals and business teachers met to analyze different success models of small and large brands, both local and international. Our aim was to establish a pattern, beyond specific causalities, that would let us explain why certain brands obtain very good results with relatively little investment in communication, while others that invest a great deal do not manage to generate particular enthusiasm.

Our conclusions, although we cannot classify them as scientific at this stage, allowed us to develop a working model that brings a certain order to the increasingly complex task of brand management. A profession in constant change like ours cannot be simplified into a single model. But we are going to have an ever growing need for models that help us learn both from success and from failure.

Teaching how to buy

Too many people still think that having a brand is "dressing up" what they have to offer. Creating an image tends to be confused lying, concealing or simply using communication tricks for the sake of impact. However, brands fulfill a fundamental function in our purchasing process, as they not only help simplify it but should also contribute gratifying information.

The principal function of a brand is to teach us how to buy. Even as adults with considerable experience in shopping, we realize that most of the time we have no idea how to select a product. What really defines a good mattress? What kind of biscuit is really the healthiest? Buying is complicated. We are not experts in most categories. We don't have time to be, and the information provided by experts is often contradictory.

Intel Inside is the best example of a brand that recognized a problem and taught people how to buy. When people did not know how to buy computers, Intel told us: "Don't worry, you only have to know a couple of things to buy yourself a computer: The computer's brain is the Intel chip and the key feature is the speed that I brand (286, 386, 486, Pentium)."

Brand building in phases

If we accept the premise that teaching people how to buy is the main goal of a brand and we observe how successful brands have achieved this over time, we see that they follow fairly precise guidelines when it comes to coordinating their messages. In fact, they follow some very basic rules:

- We learn from the simplest to the most complex. The communication focuses on key ideas, which are then developed over time.
- We learn concrete things that become abstract. A child first learns the color red, what a dog is or the shape of a circle because these are specific things. Over the years, we learn abstract concepts such as love, justice, ethics and so on.

The process of creating a brand follows these two principles and is based on how to get a small community to adopt a simple idea, which becomes more sophisticated over time, becoming an abstract emotional concept that grows in meaning.

Specifically, there are four phases in this brand creation process:

1. Creating a mental space

When a brand is created, you never start from scratch. In the initial phase, strong brands know how to connect themselves to a versatile mental space, full of positive meanings and opportunities for growth. At this stage the market is organized in a very heterogeneous and dispersed way. Segmenting is not recommended yet because our first followers will probably leave the market as soon as we become a more popular option.

Instead of emphasizing a concept with mass appeal, we operate in a series of niches where we have managed to make an impact. At this point, the communication strategy must give priority to the notoriety variable. The more popular we make a concept, the easier it will be for us to grow. Once the mental space has been defined, the first basic level of information we will launch will be about who we are. At this stage, it's tempting to make the message more sophisticated, but practice has shown that it is better to make sure we are anchored to the key concept we are interested in communicating.

In this phase, it's best to have groups of influencers that help to popularize our idea. Branding involves scattering seeds in many directions, trying different disciplines, affecting groups with different profiles. From the perspective of distribution, we will probably have been included on a trial basis in secondary channels, while mass distribution is restricted.

Let's take the example of the energy drink Red Bull. In its early branding phase, it was distributed at petrol stations or similar outlets as something exceptional, and was adopted by lorry drivers to stop them from falling asleep at night and to other small groups such as fans of extreme sports and the nightclubbing set. The brand managed to successfully relate to these small groups and use them to popularize its concept and help it become mainstream.

2. Developing the rational argument

All niches can become mainstream if they successfully complete phase two: developing the rational argument. This is the time when, thanks in part to competition with other brands, our concept starts to become popular. For example, when more drinks decide to define themselves as "energy" drinks, a new product category starts to be created in the consumer's mind, and new targets wish to try it. In addition, the effect of the competition generates a fall in prices and the possibility of binding a space in large-scale distribution, which gives us the opportunity for our concept to reach the masses.

Now is the time to generate messages about the quality of the product, to help differentiate it from others. Our communication should concretely describe what this product does that the competition doesn't. At this stage of brand development, it's time to innovate, expand, make our concept credible with facts, figures, etc. Advertising can act as a catalyst. It is the time to gain critical mass.

3. Establishing emotional bonds

In the next phase of branding, the leader systematically begins to focus on building an emotional bond with consumers. At this phase, the product and its characteristics move into the background and the intangibles of the product come into play. When a brand starts to establish emotional bonds with its consumers, it starts to become stronger and gain a competitive

edge, which will help protect it from market fluctuations. One example of this is how some brands of detergent are starting to work on emotional appeal to set their brands apart as more than the classic "washes whiter." The "Dirt Is Good" campaign from Persil sought to help the detergent brand evolve from its performance to more empathic values with its target audience by making a connection with the playfulness (and messiness) of childhood.

4. Leading to a complex brand architecture

When the maximum number of consumers and competitors are in the market, when segmentation appears necessary. The aim of the brand must be to cover not only the most profitable groups, but to exploit, thanks to the awareness and the personality already established, the maximum number of options through an internal or external brand architecture.

This is when strong brands reap their most profitable rewards—through brand extensions, co-branding and complex architectures. This minimizes the risk of marketing new products and bolstering the personalities of the brand portfolio. Building a good brand architecture without losing brand meaning is a challenge, but it can result in competitive advantages like extending the innovation life cycle to other sub-brands.

Successful brands know what they have to do at each specific phase, how they have to teach consumers how to buy at each moment, when to be simple and when to elaborate on the message. Good brand communication means saying the right thing at the right time.

DIGITAL PR

Mandatory Reading: Theaker, Chapter 17: *Using the Internet Effectively in Public Relations*; Chapter 18: *Changing Media*

Best Practice Guidelines: Online presentations 2009

About these guidelines

The Best Practice guidelines set out here should be an important source of guidance to all companies seeking to improve the quality of their online presentations. These recommendations draw upon the best practice currently observed by listed companies.

The website is the perfect environment to provide investors with access to presentations. When a company organises an event, such as preliminary results, there is often related information, which should be provided to enable a full understanding and provide equal access to all investors whether they are at the event or accessing information via the website.

The following information is often associated with presentations and consideration should be given on how to best display this online to ensure all investors have access and that communication is open and transparent.

General principles

There are a number of principles that should be considered when organising an investor presentation and its communication:

Prior to the event

- Notification – the website should be used to let people know about forthcoming events. This could include financial calendars and home page hotspots (areas available to highlight key information).
- RSS alerts and email sign-up facility – provide investors with the ability to register to receive RSS and email alerts when presentations are announced or uploaded to the website.

Day of presentation

- Update the website's hotspots to say the presentation is available online and link through to a web page which holds all the related information.
- Email the subscription list to let them know the presentation is available and provide a direct link to the related information.
- Upload the information as soon as it is available. For example if a press release is sent to the Stock Exchange at 7am it should be available online at 7am too.
- Provide the direct URL (web address) to the presentation on all associated information such as press releases so that investors can easily find the information.

- Provide information online in both HTML and PDF.
- Information available – the amount of related information may differ depending on the type of presentation but it is likely to include the following:
 - Press release – in HTML and PDF (if it is a long press release such as preliminary results announcement it may only be possible to provide the first few pages in HTML initially – the full detail should be uploaded as soon as it is available).
 - PowerPoint presentation – in HTML and PDF. The HTML version should enable slides to be enlarged to allow for easier reading of tables and graphs, and have forward and back buttons and a navigable index to allow for easy access to slides of particular interest.
 - Webcast – live and archived with Q&As. This can be either audio only or audio and video.
 - If you have an audio webcast you could consider podcasting events – allow investors to download audio files to their desktop or MP3 players.
 - Investor packs/briefings.
 - Videos of interviews with senior managers.
- In addition to the presentation pages, other areas of the website may also need updating to ensure a consistent message and that correct information is available. This may include financial information, key facts, company profiles and strategy information.

After the event

It may not be possible to provide all information on the day of the event due to time constraints. Any related information should be available as soon as possible. This may include the following:

- Full HTML of interim or preliminary reports.
- Transcript of presentation.
- Transcript of conference call.
- Indexed Q&As of webcasts.
- Archive presentation (for Interim and Preliminary presentations it is advised that the archive is kept for at least 5 years in-line with the time frame for financial statements).

Accessibility

Online information should be accessible. This means it must be designed to allow equal access to information and services to all users, including those with visual, hearing, cognitive and motor impairments. Users should be able to control a number of features including the size of the text, layout and navigation. Where possible information should be available in a variety of formats for example a transcript should be made available alongside a webcast, or the data sheets behind graphs/charts available for 'reading' software for visually impaired users.

How to write for the Internet

By **Kim Harrison**, Consultant, Author and Principal of www.cuttingedgepr.com

Assumptions are dangerous on the Internet, especially the assumption that visitors are going to be captivated by the brilliance of your website! It is much wiser to assume:

Every visitor knows nothing about your organization.

Visitors will merely want a low involvement with your website (it is just one of millions of websites).

Visitors will have a low level of concentration and commitment.

A primer on the fundamentals of design and writing for print and Web

Print design is based on letting the eyes walk over the information, selectively looking at objects on the page and noting the difference between various elements on the page that stand out to the eye. In contrast, Web design functions by allowing the information to be scrolled or clicked in a manual motion. Interactivity of the site and physical user movement are integral to the Web-page experience.

Print currently offers several advantages over Web pages, but within the next ten years the differences will be minimal, and some experts predict that various media such as newspapers, video and magazines will be integrated. At present, the time to download a Web page is slower than the time it takes to turn the page of a newspaper, the screen resolution is not as good as a newspaper page, and the screen is smaller than a newspaper page.

For the next ten years or so, the differences will remain and will dictate restrictions on Web design:

- fewer graphics (graphics slow the downloading time);
- smaller graphics (ditto);
- shorter text (since it is not as easy to read online);
- a smaller font range (since the host doesn't know what fonts the user has installed on their computer);
- simpler layouts.

Looking even further ahead, it will continue to be necessary to limit the word count since users will continue to be more impatient online and will be motivated to move on. It will also be necessary to design Web information for small layouts because laptop computers, mobile telephones (cell phones) and BlackBerries will retain small screens even if larger screens are used at home and in the office.

Greater user engagement on Web pages will be possible by using non-static design elements such as moving images under user control. Pointing to objects will generate explanations or expansions of information to be made using pop-ups, overlays and voiceovers.

Slow response times are the worst problem against Web usability. Bloated graphic design is the main offender, especially using Flash graphics. (Readers equate animated pages with useless pages, so don't get led astray by irresponsible graphic designers.)

Typical download time should be reviewed and graphics should either be removed or made smaller if download times are slow. About 10 seconds is the approximate limit for keeping the user's attention focused on the screen view. For longer delays, users will want to perform other tasks while waiting for the computer to finish, so the screen should provide feedback in the form of a 'percent-done' progress indicator showing when the computer expects to finish that task.

Many design problems are so simple, yet they persist. For instance, one of the main user complaints in 2005 is the use of too-small font sizes. This may allow more words to fit into the available space, but it riles readers, especially baby boomers whose days of 20:20 eyesight are long gone. The other main complaint is about the low contrast between text and background, which makes reading more difficult. ¹

Poorly designed corporate websites cost millions

At present, far too many design obstacles prevent users from easily navigating within websites. Recent studies confirming this give cause for concern about the extent of lost sales and information for users.

In one US study of large commercial sites, users could only find information 42% of the time, even though they were taken to the correct home page before they were given the test tasks. A further study found that half the 20 major sites examined violated simple design principles. You may say: "So what?"

Well, research shows that bad Web design can lose about 50% of the potential sales from a site, and it causes lost repeat visits from 40% of the users who don't return when their first visit resulted in a negative experience. This can cost millions of dollars on a large website with an e-commerce function and can cause the reputation to suffer on sites designed mainly to provide stakeholder information. ²

What about government departments? They wouldn't have to worry much about things like losing sales, and therefore the website design wouldn't matter much...or would it? An example: poor design means that people trying to pay license fees online would leave the website frustrated and would have to telephone or pay over the counter instead. This means that more staff would be needed to handle these disgruntled customers – creating a budget drain.

Why Web users scan instead of read

Almost 80% of Web users scan Web pages instead of reading them. There are four main reasons that account for this behavior:

Reading from computer screens is tiring on the eye and about 25% slower than reading from paper due to the nature of the medium.

The Web is a user-driven medium where users feel they have to move on and click onto things rather than wade through a whole article. Observation shows that people want to feel active when they are on the Web.

Each page has to compete for the user's attention against millions of other pages. Users don't know whether this page is the one they need or whether another page would be better, so the user moves on.

Modern life is hectic and people simply don't want to work too hard for their information. At work they already receive too many emails and voicemail messages. They won't want to spend unnecessary time on the Web page.

Writing for the Web

Since 80% of users always scan pages rather than read in detail, and reading from computer screens is 25% slower than reading from paper, therefore Web content should have half the word count of its paper equivalent.

In print, the document forms a whole and the user is focused on the entire set of information. On the Web, each page needs to be almost stand-alone in structure. Since users aren't willing to read long pages, most documents need to be split into multiple hyperlinked pages.

Users can enter a site at any page and move between pages as they choose, so every page needs to be independent and its topic explained without assuming the previous page has been seen by the reader. Links should be provided to background or explanatory information.

Navigating documents – when writing a document for the Web, use links to guide the reader through the document to access the most relevant information. Whenever possible, state conclusions first and link to supporting details; show categories and link to lists; summarize information and link to obtain the rest of the information. This allows the user to scan the contents of a page and select relevant and useful information.

Since readers use links as guideposts in scanning, only the most relevant should be part of the document – they shouldn't be a distraction. Position less relevant, but meaningful links of additional information in the Web page's margin or at the end of a document.

Credibility is important on the Web, where users often know nothing about the organization. The user's trust needs to be earned. It is quickly lost if hype and 'puffery' is used. A low-key, objective style is required.

Hyperlinks to other sites that carry supporting information increase the credibility of your pages. If possible, quotes from other sources should be linked to the page.

Web users are impatient and critical. They have accessed the site because they need to. Writing should be in a concise, informal style to allow users to quickly find the information they want.

Similar to a journalistic style, start the page with the conclusion and a short summary of the remaining contents ('inverted pyramid' style). Users don't like to scroll through masses of text, so the most important information should be put first.

Each paragraph should only contain one main idea; use a second paragraph for a second idea, since users tend to skip any second point as they scan over the paragraph. Use simple sentences; anything complicated is even harder to understand online.

Pages should be updated over time to reflect all changes. Statistics, numbers and examples all need to be recent or credibility suffers, especially when 'forthcoming events' have already happened.

VISUAL ELEMENTS

Every Picture Tells a Story

by Brian O'Mara-Croft

Communication World » September-October 2008

www.iabc.com/cw

Yet as valuable as images are in conveying messages, visuals are seldom a one-for-one replacement for text. Images and text should serve as tools to increase understanding; the goal should always be to communicate a lot, using as little as possible.

We live in a world of pictures. Our cinemas, galleries, stadiums, airports, schools, offices, homes and highways (and even our information superhighways) are rich with icons and images that please, inspire, direct, tempt and sometimes offend. On our walls and in our yards, and even in our dress and grooming, we present visual cues about how we want to be perceived by the world at large.

And while it's true that human fascination with graphic storytelling has flourished through this digital age, our love affair with images is by no means new. Pictures have supported stories for almost as long as humans could tell them—more than 35,000 years, by some accounts. But have communicators lost touch with how to best take advantage of visuals? And if we're smitten with imagery, is there still a place for words?

For communicators, capturing the attention of an audience and then reaching it with a desired message is no small feat. Depending on which source you believe, the average American, for example, is confronted with between 250 and 3,000 advertising messages every day. Even at the low end of that range, our task is not unlike leading audiences to the proverbial giant haystack (in a field of such stacks) and hoping we can push them onto the needle. Here's the rub; Each person we want to reach perceives their time to be at such a premium and of such great value that we need to get our message across with great efficiency. If we want someone to take an action, we must present that action as clearly, and in as few steps, as possible. Effective visual communication—in the form of practical, directive information design—is a means to that end.

Too often, these important how-to messages find their way into PowerPoint presentations that are little more than lines of text, bullets and irrelevant clip art in a template that distracts more than it guides. Animation and transition effects only serve to extend this gaudy air. As information design uber-expert Edward Tufte laments, "We've drifted into this presentation mode without realizing the cost to the content and the audience in the process." Images and text should serve as tools to increase understanding; the goal should always be to communicate a lot, using as little as possible. Fortunately, some communicators are borrowing concepts from the worlds of information design, technical illustration, concept mapping and gaming. To reach audiences with aesthetically compelling, simple and practical visual tools. Wielding media as simple as a deck of cards or a doorknob hanger, or as grand in scale as wall-size maps, visual communicators focus on using pictures to guide audiences to rapid action. The logic is sound. Can you imagine visiting a strange city and taking a subway ride without studying the system map to locate a desired destination? Or building a complicated piece of furniture without

following instructions? Doesn't it stand to reason, then, that we would be better equipped to effect meaningful change if we point out audiences in the right direction?

James Manktelow, in *Memory Techniques*, claims that 65 percent of us are visual learners, compared with 30 percent auditory and 5 percent kinesthetic. Tellabs, a Naperville, Illinois-based telecom equipment provider, arrived at a very visual solution to a naming external information challenge. Competitors, analysts and reporters were phoning employees to probe for proprietary business information, which in some cases led to analyst or media reports that were inaccurate and incomplete. Tellabs needed its employees to instead direct all external audiences to authorized contacts.

In addition to addressing the issue through its intranet, Tellabs discussed the issue at town hall meetings and provided each employee with a place mat-size map that likened proprietary corporate information to the treasure in a well-reinforced castle, with clear, guarded means of ingress and egress. Within the walls are the components of business information that need to be guarded. On the outside are potential threats, represented in part by a Trojan horse and a well-equipped army.

The approach was admittedly tongue-in-cheek; the overall message, though, was not. "Tellabs employees focus on being helpful to customers, so some had been tempted to help analysts, competitors and others seeking Tellabs' proprietary information for their own gain," said George Stenitzer, the company's vice president of corporate communication. "We found the visual map effective in communicating that everyone plays a role in protecting Tellabs' information assets, and so external requests for information need to be directed to specific authorized contacts."

Visual maps can serve many other purposes. They are ideal for illustrating the differences between a current state and a desired future state, such as the steps necessary to achieve a broad vision. They effectively capture "day in the life" scenarios, such as a new hire's first day or what distinguishes an organization for recruiting purposes.

They can show how a company's systems work together, how profits are realized, how sales incentive programs are structured or how a company is demonstrating environmental responsibility. At their best, information graphics help your audiences step briefly into the life and try it on for size. The successful visual communicator must understand how to effectively combine graphic and text-based messages; ideally, this person is a hybrid communicator with more or less equal strength in both writing and design, along with a strong sense of communication strategy.

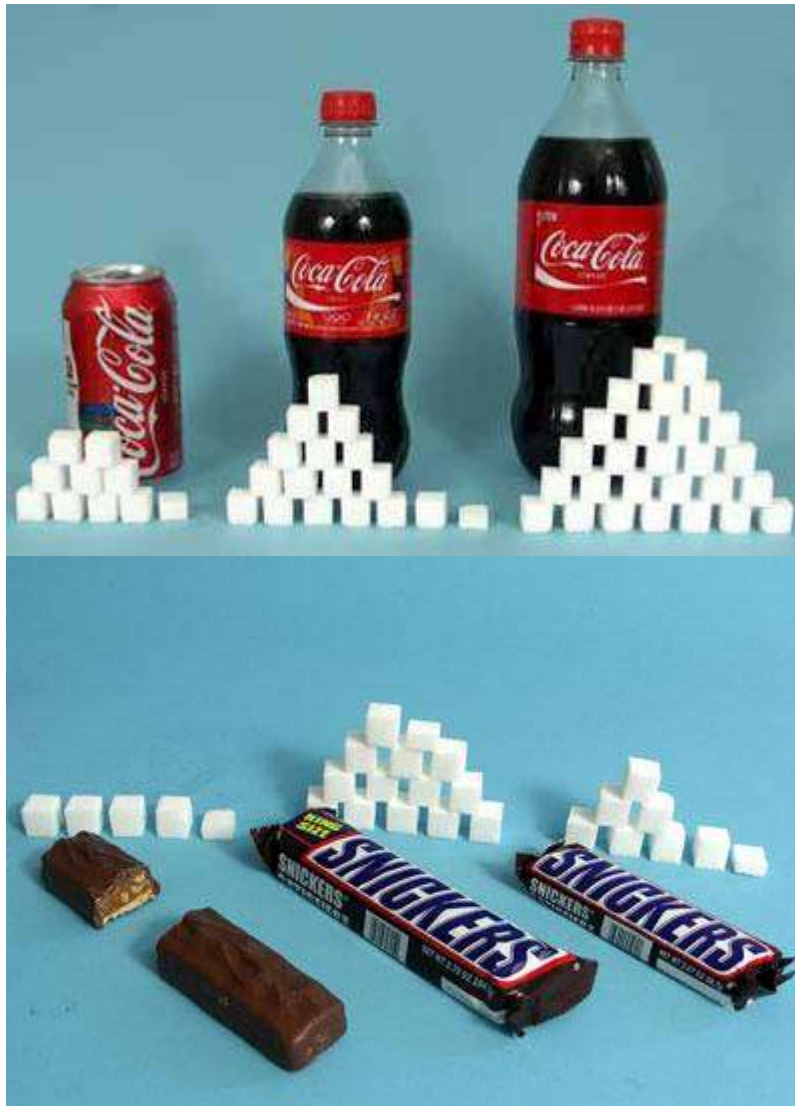
This is about real means to real results, not window dressing designed to evade legitimate problems. A picture is only worth a thousand words if the message is accurate, relevant and well constructed. In the ideal, we achieve Tufte's goal, where "clear and precise seeing becomes as one with clear and precise thinking." As valuable as images are in conveying these messages, visuals are seldom a one-for-one replacement for text. Rather, it's in the effective combination of text and images that visual communication wields the greatest power. Wilson Hicks, in his book *Words and Pictures*, posits that when words and pictures are equally expressive, the two become one medium where "the meaning of the work can be achieved in one perceptual act." A strong information graphic, then, can actually be quite text-heavy; the words are just organized in a way that makes them easy to read and absorb. While visual communication has tremendous value in moving audiences to action, it is not without a fairly broad dark side. Countless times, charts and other data displays have been manipulated to stretch the magnitude of a situation simply by playing with the axis. The same rules of honesty

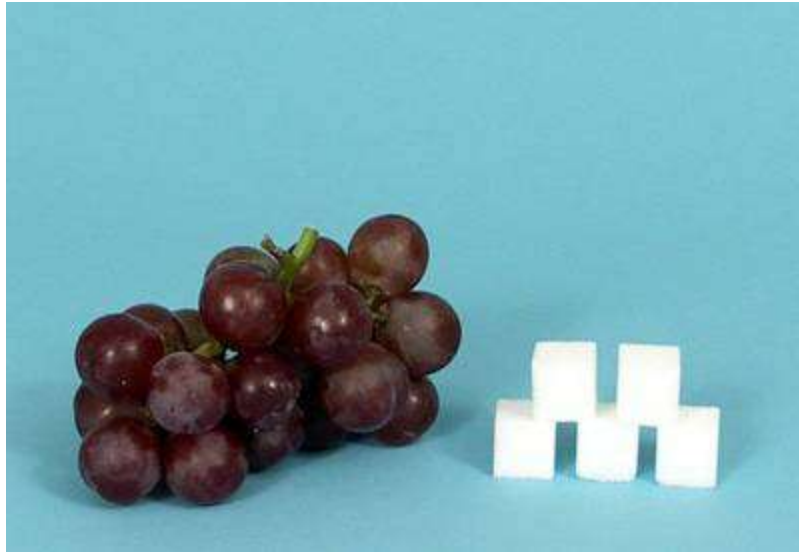
and ethics must be applied to the visual realm. A pig is a pig, regardless of how much lipstick you apply.

Here, then, are a few pointers for communicating in the visual realm:

- **Use the familiar.** Visual communication should quickly close the gap between the audience and understanding. If you use visual metaphors, keep them clear; obscure or clever graphics can confuse more than guide.
- **Focus on the big picture.** In writing, we often provide detail without easily conveying the broader context. Use your pictures to connect the dots between discrete concepts. A vision statement may be easier to grasp if it draws heavily upon our ability to see,
- **Lend humanity to your designs.** Readers will relate to the messages much more effectively if you can show their place in the action. Show your new office floor plan with employees using the new library and lunchroom. Provide supermarket customers with a shopping list that walks them through the store and a recipe for their evening meal. The next time you're tempted to say "Employees are our most important asset," why not show them exactly what you mean?
- **Balance images and text.** Pictures alone are too cold and simplistic to convey much information on their own. A careful blend of text and images packs a wallop. Don't feel that you need to minimize words; instead, minimize meaningless elements, both in text and pictures.
- **Show real solutions to real challenges.** Your metaphor may mean nothing if the reader cannot understand it in context. Using building blocks, rings or armies of bunnies could show how units of a merged business will be joined, but this ignores the more profound cultural implications of the event.
- **Remember why you're using images.** Ansel Adams once opined, "There's nothing worse than a sharp image of a fuzzy concept." While he was referring to photography, the same can be true of all visual communication. Edward Tufte takes issue with what he calls "chartjunk"—essentially, any [mes, boxes, numbers or images that add nothing to the reader's understanding. Don't get caught up in your love of the pictures to the detriment of your message. •

VISUALS IN PRACTICE: *HOW SWEET IS IT REALLY?*







MANAGING MEANING

Framing (social sciences)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Framing, a term used in [media studies](#), [sociology](#) and [psychology](#), refers to the [social construction](#) of a [social phenomenon](#) by [mass media](#) sources or specific political or social movements or organizations. It is an inevitable process of selective influence over the individual's [perception](#) of the meanings attributed to words or phrases. A frame defines the packaging of an element of [rhetoric](#) in such a way as to encourage certain interpretations and to discourage others.

Experimental demonstration

[Amos Tversky](#) and [Daniel Kahneman](#) have shown that framing can affect the outcome (ie. the choices one makes) of choice problems, to the extent that several of the classic axioms of [rational choice](#) do not hold.^[4] This led to the development of [prospect theory](#) as an alternative to rational choice theory.^[5] Tversky and Kahneman (1981) demonstrated systematic reversals of preference when the same problem is presented in different ways, for example in the Asian disease problem. Participants were asked to "imagine that the U.S. is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume the exact scientific estimate of the consequences of the programs are as follows."

The first group of participants were presented with a choice between two programs:

- Program A: "200 people will be saved"
- Program B: "there is a one-third probability that 600 people will be saved, and a two-thirds probability that no people will be saved"

72 percent of participants preferred program A (the remainder, 28 percent, opting for program B).

The second group of participants were presented with the choice between:

- Program C: "400 people will die"
- Program D: "there is a one-third probability that nobody will die, and a two-third probability that 600 people will die"

In this decision frame, 78 percent preferred program D, with the remaining 22 percent opting for program C.

Programs A and C are effectively identical, as are programs B and D. The change in the decision frame between the two groups of participants produced a preference reversal, with the first group preferring program A/C and the second group preferring B/D.^[6]

Examples

- "[Counterterrorism](#) as law enforcement" vs. "[Counterterrorism](#) as [war](#)".
As [Lakoff](#) observes: "[Colin Powell](#) argued within the administration that it [the [assault of September 11, 2001](#)] be treated as a [crime](#). This would have involved international crime-fighting techniques: checking banks accounts, wire-tapping, recruiting spies and informants, engaging in diplomacy, cooperating with intelligence agencies in other governments, and if necessary, engaging in limited "police actions" with military force. ... But the crime frame did not prevail in the [Bush administration](#). Instead, a war [metaphor](#) was chosen: the "[War on Terror](#)."^[16]

The "bad apple" frame, as in the proverb "one bad [apple](#) spoils the barrel". This frame implies that removing one underachieving or corrupt official from an [institution](#) will solve a given problem; an opposing frame presents the same problem as systematic or structural to the institution itself—a source of infectious and spreading rot.^[18]

Framing Public Issues (Extract)

FrameWorks Institute, Washington DC

2002

Framing refers to the way a story is told – its selective use of particular symbols, metaphors, and messengers, for example – and to the way these cues, in turn, trigger the shared and durable cultural models that people use to make sense of their world. “Frames are organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the world (emphasis in the original)” (Reese).

Reframing seeks to identify alternative frames of interpretation that, although weaker and less common to media, can nevertheless serve the labeling function and foreground different policies or actions. Essentially, reframing changes the lens through which a person can think about the issue, so that different interpretations and outcomes become visible to them.

“The way in which the world is imagined determines at any particular moment what men will do.”
Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, 1921

When issues advocates approach communications, they do so with three important questions in mind:

1. How do we get people to think about our issues?
2. How do we get them to think about our issues in such a way that they will want to solve them through public policies, not only through individual actions?
3. How do we get them to think about issues in such a way that they want to solve them through our public policies?

WHAT RESEARCH SUGGESTS

- People use mental shortcuts to make sense of the world.
- Incoming information provides cues about where to “file” it mentally.
- People get most information about public affairs from the news media which, over time, creates a framework of expectation, or a dominant frame.
- Over time, we develop habits of thought and expectation and configure incoming information to conform to this frame.

Strategic frame analysis – FrameWorks’ approach to communications – is based on a decade of research in the social and cognitive sciences that demonstrates that the answers to these questions relates to what Walter Lippmann called “the pictures in our heads.”

People use mental shortcuts to make sense of the world. These mental shortcuts rely on “frames,” or a small set of internalized concepts and values that allow us to accord meaning to unfolding events and new information. These frames can be triggered by various elements,

such as language choices and different messengers or images. These communications elements, therefore, have a profound influence on decision outcomes.

Frames are existing constructs that allow us to interpret developing events. William Raspberry, writing in *The Washington Post*, explains the power of frames when he says, “Perhaps the only way we can assimilate new information is by fitting it into the framework of something we already understand.” He goes on to explore the meaning of terrorism “by thinking about America and black people.” And, in so doing, he demonstrates the way our judgments about political issues can be influenced by the frame we use to make sense of new situations. Thinking about the civil-rights movement, Raspberry writes: “When we saw it as a choice between civil progress and bloodshed, our minds went one way. When we saw the choice as between siding with brutal law enforcement and siding with black folk demanding change, our minds went the other way.” Raspberry has elegantly illuminated the framing process that is so critical, if invisible, to political judgment.

WHAT IS A FRAME?

“Frames are organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world.” Stephen D. Reese, *Framing Public Life*, 2001

WHERE DO PEOPLE GET THEIR FRAMES OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS?

“Most people don’t think about most issues most of the time,” write Nelson Polsby and Aaron Wildavsky in a famous analysis of American public opinion. The public has little daily contact with many issues on the public agenda, yet their opinions greatly influence policymaker priorities and behavior. Traditionally, news media is the main source of Americans’ information about public affairs. In this way, the media dramatically influences what issues the public and their policymakers will address. Moreover, messages conveyed by mainstream media take on the value of public narratives about the ways of the world. Thus, media doesn’t simply tell us what to think about, it tells us how to think about issues. News coverage influences:

What issues people think are important for government to address (agenda-setting)

The lens through which people interpret issues (framing), and

What information will prove relevant for social and political judgments (priming).

The media’s influence on how we think about social problems lasts far beyond our memory of a particular newscast or news topic. The way the news is “framed” on many issues sets up habits of thought and expectation that, over time, are so powerful that they serve to configure new information to conform to this frame. When advocacy groups communicate to their members and potential adherents, they have options to repeat or break these dominant frames of discourse. Understanding which frames serve to advance which policy options with which groups becomes central to any movement’s strategy.

The literature of social movements suggests that the prudent choice of frames, and the ability to effectively contest the opposition’s frames, lie at the heart of successful policy advocacy. Most movements are associated with the development of an innovative master frame that will either constrain or inspire that movement’s future development. When the nuclear freeze had to grow

beyond armaments, scholars argue, the frame could not accommodate that growth. A frame isn't simply a slogan repeated over and over; rather, it is a conceptual construct capable of helping us organize our world. When frames fail to do so, they are discarded in favor of other frames. But more often, when new facts are submitted that do not resonate with the frames we hold in our heads, it is the facts that are rejected, not the frames.

We find particularly helpful Deborah Tannen's explanation of how frames work: "People approach the world not as naïve, blank-slate receptacles who take in stimuli ... in some independent and objective way, but rather as experienced and sophisticated veterans of perception who have stored their prior experiences as an organized mass. This prior experience then takes the form of expectations about the world, and in the vast majority of cases, the world, being a systematic place, confirms these expectations, saving the individual the trouble of figuring things out anew all the time."

Frames are powerful not only because we have internalized them from media, but because they have become second nature to us – they allow us to process information efficiently and get about our lives. The limited number of frames we use allows us to understand new information in terms of stories we already know.

Finding some familiar element causes us to activate the story that is labeled by that familiar element, and we understand the new story as if it were an exemplar of that old element."

"Understanding means finding a story you already know and saying, 'Oh yeah, that one.'" "Once we have found (the) story, we stop processing." Roger Schank, *Tell Me A Story*, 1998

Reframes are only possible because ideas and issues come in hierarchies. The cognitive sciences teach us that these hierarchies, or levels of thought, track and direct our thinking. Higher-level frames act as primes for lower-level frames, and higher-level frames map their values and reasoning onto the lower-level frames.

LEVELS OF UNDERSTANDING

LEVEL ONE: Big ideas, like freedom, justice, community, success, prevention, responsibility

LEVEL TWO: Issue-types, like the environment or child care

LEVEL THREE: Specific issues, like rainforests or earned income tax credits

By appealing to higher-level values to reframe, we can signal to people how to think about various social issues. And by testing the ability of certain Level One frames to lift policy preferences on those issues, we can be sure that we are moving people toward consideration of solutions.

Strategic frame analysis adopts the position, now current in several academic disciplines, that people reason on the basis of deeply held moral values, more than on the basis of self-interest or "pocket-book" appeals. When we approach people as citizens, parents and stewards of the earth, we tap into powerful models that guide their thinking about themselves and their political responsibilities. We do this not by playing "identity politics" or forcing people to identify themselves as "environmentalists" or "child advocates," but rather by reminding them of the widely shared Level One values they already incorporate into their thinking about how to make

important choices for the world. At issue are words and concepts like “responsibility,” “choice,” “dependence,” “protection,” and “stewardship.”

Adopting the perspective of strategic frame analysis means understanding that communications is storytelling, but that the stories we tell must have all the elements in place: frames, messengers, evidence, cause and effect. We must tell a story that is about politics, in the sense that it is about the values that drive us to communal action. We must tell a story that invites people into the solution, by demonstrating that solutions exist. We must tell the story with storytellers whom the public believes have no reason to lie to us, and who have authority and knowledge of the issue.

CONTEXT

Context is one of the most difficult elements of the frame to describe, and one of the most important to get right. In FrameWorks trainings, we explain context by first showing the group a picture of cows chewing grass in a field. We explain that some cows are getting sick, and we ask the group to speculate about the cause. Invariably, people work within the frame that has been given them; they ask if the farmer gave the cows bad feed, or if the farmer is experienced, or if the cows have wandered into an adjacent field, or if the cows caught a disease from other cows. We then add a backdrop that shows an urban landscape, with smoke stacks belching fumes just over the cows’ heads, and we ask the group again:

Why do you think the cows are getting sick? This time, of course, they are able to broaden the scope of their speculation to include environmental causes, and to ask about the relationship of the cows to their air, water and soil. This exercise brings home the importance of getting context into the initial definition of the problem.

Context provides more than details about individuals; it focuses on issues and trends that are common to groups. And to identify trends requires systems-level thinking. This means that you must be strategic in identifying the problem you want to communicate as one that involves the entire community. The way you identify the problem makes all the difference in how people are able to view your solutions. When people understand issues as individual problems, they may feel critical or compassionate, but they won’t see policies and programs as the solutions. For example, the dominant frame for children’s issues is a needy child and a parent, and this two-person frame sets up the idea that the parent, and the parent alone, is responsible for the child’s needs. However, if you provide context and broaden the frame to include other parents, the community, business leaders, the mayor, etc., you define the problem as public in nature and expand the possibilities for meeting children’s needs.

HOW TO USE CONTEXT EFFECTIVELY

- Link current data and messages to long-term trends.
- Interpret the data: Tell the public what is at stake and what it means to neglect this problem.
- Define the problem so that community influences and opportunities are apparent – connect the dots, both verbally and in illustrations.
- Focus on how well the community/state is doing in addressing this problem, not on how well individuals are addressing it.

- Connect the episodes of your community’s issues to root causes, conditions, and trends with which people are familiar.
- Assign responsibility.
- Present a solution.

NUMBERS

WHAT RESEARCH SUGGESTS ABOUT THIS ELEMENT OF THE FRAME

Once a frame is established, it will “trump” numbers.

- Most people cannot judge the size or meaning of numbers; they need cues.
- Numbers alone often fail to create “pictures in our heads.”

An important finding from the cognitive sciences is the ability of the frame to overpower the numbers that follow. In other words, if the facts don’t fit the frame, it’s the facts that are rejected, not the frame. Confronted with facts that one might presume would cause the group to reconsider its position, people opt instead to adhere to their original position and to ignore the conflicting data.

As many have come to realize, both numbers and narratives evoke frames. The trick is how to combine them so that they work together to evoke a frame of collective responsibility and public policy. Here are some simple suggestions for integrating narrative and numbers:

First, never provide numbers without telling what they mean. While scientists concerned with objectivity may feel it important to “put the numbers out there and let the facts fall where they may,” they are setting the stage for public misunderstanding, public boredom, or public manipulation by those who do not hold back from interpretation.

Moreover, the ratio of numbers to narrative should be relatively low. Embed the statistics in a tight little story that tells what is happening, how big a problem this is and what can and should be done about it.

ENVIRONMENT – WEAK EXAMPLE

At current consumption rates, we put back in the air each year about 100,000 years of stored carbon. In the last 150 years we have put about 290 billion tones (gigatonnes or Gt) into the air. Amidst the claimed uncertainties about the climate-change phenomenon, there is no dispute that these emissions have caused significant increases in atmospheric concentrations of CO₂. Today’s CO₂ levels are about 370 parts per million (ppm), about 30 percent higher than the pre-industrial level of 280 ppm.

ENVIRONMENT – BETTER EXAMPLE

Humankind is altering the atmosphere at a rapid pace. Since industrialization began just 150 years ago, concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere have increased by almost one-third. This is happening because burning fossil fuels releases carbon into the atmosphere,

carbon that it took the Earth millions of years to bury away. Each year we are using 100,000 years worth of stored carbon. Even once we shift away from fossil fuels, it will take centuries for Earth to store the carbon away again.

Second, try to provide the interpretation first, then the data. That way, your numbers connect to an idea. By raising the broader principle first, you allow people to hear your numbers as evidence, not as raw data.

INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLE

“Two years ago in Nigeria, an AK-47 could be had in exchange for two cows. Now the price is down to one cow. And in the Sudan, you can get an AK-47 for a chicken.” (Marie Griesgraber, Oxfam America)

“There are 100 million people in this country without access to fluoridated water and over 100 million people in this country without dental health insurance. For every child who is uninsured for medical care, there are two to three children who are uninsured for dental care....” “Few Smiling About USA’s Dental Health,” USA Today, October 9, 2000

HOW TO USE NUMBERS EFFECTIVELY

- Use numbers sparingly. When you use dramatic numbers, you may have the inadvertent effect of making the problem seem too big, too scary, or too far away.
- Provide the meaning first, then the numbers. Use social math to reinforce that meaning.
- Use numbers strategically: not simply to establish the size of the problem, but to convey the cost of ignoring it.
- Use numbers to underscore efficacy, demonstrating cost-effectiveness.

MESSENGERS

- The choice of messengers is as important as the message itself.
- The message is reinforced or undermined by the choice of messenger.
- Knowledge and trustworthiness are critical to public acceptance, not likeability or familiarity.
- Some messengers are not credible on certain issues because we assume they are biased toward a perspective.
- Unlikely allies can prompt public reconsideration of an issue or recommendation.
- Some messengers convey specific frames.

HOW TO USE MESSENGERS EFFECTIVELY

- Use messengers who reinforce the systemic connection and underscore the severity of the problem.

- Use spokespeople who establish the problem as one that is public in nature.
- Test your chosen messengers for public perceptions of their knowledge and trustworthiness.
- Consider carefully the symbolic value of your chosen messengers – business executives bring the frame of managerial competence, innovators bring a solutions frame, etc.
- Use unlikely allies.
- Use advocates and those closest to the issue carefully, understanding the public's assumption that they are already vested in the issue.

VISUALS

- Pictures trigger the same models and frames as words.
- Pictures can undermine a carefully constructed verbal frame.
- Pictures are visual short hands.
- Close-up shots emphasize the personal and conceal environmental and systems-level influences.
- The narrower the frame, the less opportunity for systems-level thinking

We have been concentrating on words and how they trigger models and frames. But don't underestimate the power of visuals. After all, it has been said, "a picture is worth a thousand words." Pictures trigger the same mental models and frames as words. It is important to be aware of this, so that the frames introduced by the pictures do not work against the frames introduced by the words. Advocates often say that they cannot control the pictures at news conferences, but to some extent they can—in the way they stage the news conference and in what they suggest to the media as the visuals to accompany the story. Furthermore, advocates produce many other vehicles – such as Websites, advertising, brochures, fact sheets, action alerts and reports – in which they can control all the visual elements—and therefore the messages they send.

What, then, are the factors to consider when planning a visual, whether it is a film clip, photograph, illustration, or graphic (including maps and charts)? First, it's important to anticipate the visuals or symbols that will be applied to your issue if you do nothing to control them. More than likely, these will be generic images and will trigger frames that are traditionally associated with that issue. These stock images can reinforce stereotypes, emphasize dramatic episodes and details to the detriment of context and trends, exclude solutions and disperse accountability.

Second, recognize that choosing the "right" visual is only the first step. Even image placement can reinforce or undermine your message. When you orchestrate a series of dire-problem pictures and leave the solutions photos to the end, you promote a frame of despair or intractability, regardless of what your word frames attempt to convey. Location, size, and color can all affect the impact of your visuals. Images seem more important when they are centered, in the foreground, brightly colored, sharply defined, or overlapping with other elements. Human figures, cultural symbols or icons also signify importance.

Consider the layout of your document as a whole, or the sequencing of your photos on Websites and in film and video.

- Avoid traditional images that have dominated the news regarding your issue.
- Avoid close-up shots of individuals unless they serve your framing goals, as they tend to assign responsibility to those individuals.
- Suggest the public nature of the problem with pictures of public and community settings.
- Use sequence and placement of photos to demonstrate cause and effect, and trends instead of isolated events.

METAPHORS AND SIMPLIFYING MODELS

- Metaphors and models complete ways of thinking that include patterns of reasoning.
- They allow us to make extensive inferences beyond the words actually used.
- They are highly quotable for news media.
- They offer effective alternatives to other storytelling devices.

According to researchers associated with Cultural Logic, numerous studies in the cognitive sciences have established that both the development and the learning of complex, abstract or technical concepts typically rely on analogies. “An explanation that reduces a complex problem to a simple, concrete analogy or metaphor contributes to understanding by helping people organize information into a clear picture in their heads, including facts and ideas previously learned but not organized in a coherent way,” says psychological anthropologist Axel Aubrun. Once this analogical picture has been formed, it becomes the basis for new reasoning about the topic. Better understanding also leads to an increase in engagement and motivation.

Cognitive linguist George Lakoff introduces the notion that frames derive from a vast conceptual system whose unit is metaphor. “Metaphors as linguistic expressions are possible precisely because there are metaphors in a person’s conceptual system.” The systematization of this vast conceptual framework allows individuals to understand new information in the context of what they already know to be familiar, and to reject information that does not fit.

“Metaphors may create ... social realities for us,” according to Lakoff and Johnson (1979:10). “A metaphor may thus be a guide for future action. Indeed, their very purpose is to connect random information to myths, ideologies and stereotypes that allow the individual to process and store the new with the old. In this sense, frames reinforce worldview (Lakoff, 1996: 374).

ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMPLE

“The problem is that some people think we’re motorcycles without engines, but the truth is that we’re like hikers on wheels.” Gary Sprung, Director of a mountain-biking group as quoted in “Mountain Bikers Up Against Calif. Conservationists,” *The Washington Post*, October 2, 2002, A3. The metaphors chosen to describe the issue drive public reaction and reasoning. For example, the “horse race” metaphor applied to political elections has been shown to reduce

attention to specific issues in favor of character, strategy and poll results. Because every word that we speak, and every image that we produce, is linked in different ways to many frames and models (words and images in fact trigger the models), language and imagery will always manipulate. That is unavoidable. By bringing a level of analysis to these metaphors and models, however, advocates will be less likely to be caught by correspondences or conclusions that are evoked by the language and imagery we or someone else use, but that in fact work against the policies or positions we are advocating.

INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLE

When Congressman Joe Lieberman wanted to question President Bush's leadership on global environmental treaties, he used a metaphor: "Bonn surprised people... The feeling was that, if the United States took its football and left the field, the game wouldn't go forward. But the rest of the nations of the world found their own football, and they completed the game. They left the United States on the sidelines." Joseph Lieberman, Los Angeles Times, July 25, 2001

In order to analyze the impact of this metaphor, advocates should evaluate the following questions:

ENTAILMENTS OF THE PRESIDENT AS TEAM LEADER FRAME

- What kind of player takes the football and leaves the field?
- What kind of player sits on the sidelines?
- Is this player a leader?
- Would you want this player on your side?
- Would you entrust your country/world to such a leader?
- Use metaphors and models to help people understand how your issue works.
- In general, use metaphors and models that connect the issue to larger systems.
- Use metaphors and models that emphasize prevention and/or causality.
- Examine carefully the entailments of metaphors being used to communicate about your issue – you may be able to identify vulnerabilities in the metaphor. But be careful in examining the entailments in the reframing metaphors you develop as well.

TONE

- People toggle between a "rhetorical mode" and a "reasonable mode" of thought and discourse on this issue.
- Rhetorical mode polarizes people, turning many off, and is characteristic of much political and media discourse.

- Reasonable mode, which reflects more typical individual thinking, makes people more open to scientific findings and practical problem-solving.
- Extreme statements and partisan attacks turn many potential supporters off and do little overall to increase support for solutions on the issue.
- Advocates often lose credibility when they talk in highly partisan terms.
- The label “advocate” itself is somewhat polarizing, since it sometimes suggests dogmatism and a one-issue identity

The tone of the communications can provide powerful cues capable of effectively and efficiently communicating (or hijacking) a frame. Choosing and controlling tone, then, is as important as deploying more obvious frame elements such as messengers, visuals, or metaphors. Since we can't readily predict which element of the frame is likely to strike the audience first, we need to control all elements. If the visuals, messengers, metaphors, and tone of the communications have all been carefully constructed to work together, the odds increase that the communications will connect to the desired existing internalized frame.

What exactly is tone and how does it qualify as a frame element? Tone refers to the style, mood, manners or philosophical outlook of a communication: shrill, liberal, moderate, abrasive, etc. We owe this observation to our colleagues at Cultural Logic, who first brought this element to our attention. On social issues, we identify two categories of tone: reasonable and rhetorical. As Cultural Logic points out,

- People can be both reasonable and opinionated on any given topic.
- When they are in “reasonable mode,” they are more likely to be open to new information and to problem-solving.
- Rhetorical mode is more overtly political or ideological. It reminds people of their hardened positions and political identities, if they have them, and turns many people off.
- Experts and advocates lose credibility when they talk in rhetorical mode, as this violates the “disinterested” requirement for effective messengers.

Communicators fall into the trap of using rhetorical tone when they say things like:

- We accuse the Administration of breaking its promise to invest in education.
- The President has betrayed our trust by revoking his commitment to early education.
- The legislature is squandering the taxpayers' resources on the military instead of investing in our long-term homeland needs.
- The governor is raiding the tobacco-settlement piggybank to fund his agribusiness friends, not poor families.

These statements strongly imply a motive on the speaker's part, as well as on those attacked. The motive appears to be “politics as usual” and is more likely to communicate that frame than

the ones the speaker had intended: corruption, betrayal and dishonesty. How, then, can you critique positions with which you disagree and still win adherents? We suggest you first try to appeal to people in their roles as reasonable people trying to do the right thing. This dictates a “problem-solving tone” of respect and engagement:

- Investing in education requires long-term planning, not short-term fixes. You wouldn't plan for your own child's college education the way the Administration is proposing to finance education reform. We need to send our elected representatives back to do their homework.
- The truth is that this plan for early education offers too little, too late. This plan is not going to get our children what they need to succeed.

Criticize the plan, not the people. Demonstrate its inadequacy. Question a proposal's competence, its efficacy, its limited perspective and/or its values. But don't question motive, unless you have very, very good reason to do so. Go for the incompetence of the proposal, not its intent. Don't demonize. Demonstrate inconsistency and illogic, not hypocrisy. Don't fall into the trap of implying a vast conspiracy. Show how the proposal violates fundamental values that people already hold.

Your chances of framing tone effectively are greatly enhanced if you first use a Level One value, thereby establishing the criterion against which any subsequent argument should be measured. And if your Level One value is embedded in other frame elements (messengers, visuals, metaphors), you stand a good chance of making the cognitive connection with at least one of these elements.

A Framing Checklist

Use this checklist as an outline for developing soundbites, brochures or news release for framing errors and omissions. Use it as an evaluation tool to check your communications materials against the research and make sure you have stayed on message and used all the strategies that make sense for each kind of communiqué.

_ Based solely on the material you have provided, are you confident that an ordinary reader/viewer could answer the critical question: What is this about? Is it about prevention, safety, freedom, etc.?

_ In your attempt to frame for the reader “what is this about,” did you begin at Level One, by introducing a value like responsibility, stewardship, or fairness?

_ Did you reinforce your Level One message by using words, images, metaphors that support your frames?

_ Did you signal early in your message that solutions exist? Do the solutions “fit” the problem as defined?

_ Did you emphasize efficacy and prevention in the solution? Did you inspire optimism and give evidence that the situation can be improved?

_ Did you establish the cause of the problem, and did you assign responsibility? Reviewing your material, can you tell who created the problem and who should fix it?

_ Does your story have sufficient urgency to place it on the public agenda? Have you asked and answered the question: “What will happen if we do nothing”?

_ Did you effectively put the problem in context, explaining long-term consequences, trends and opportunities to resolve the problem, so that your story is not episodic?

_ Did you stay reasonable in tone, avoiding rhetorical or inflammatory partisan attacks as appropriate?

_ Do your visuals make the same points that your words make? Are they organized to support a coherent story?

_ Did you use numbers sparingly? Did you first tell what they mean? Did you translate them into social math?

_ Did you anticipate and deflect the default frame? Did you avoid arguing with it directly and, instead, substitute a new frame?

Did you use credible and unlikely messengers? Are they likely to be perceived as overly vested in the issue or a sole solution?

_ Is your message strategically oriented to the intended audience, i.e. if addressing business leaders, did you frame your issue as appealing to managerial competence and responsibility?

_ Did you tell people explicitly how they can help, how they can stay engaged, where they can get information, how they should continue to think about these issues, what they should watch for to monitor progress, whom to hold accountable for what actions? And when you did so, did you address them in their role as citizens or merely as consumers?

_ Did you use all elements of the frame to set up your reframe? Context, values, visuals, models and metaphors, numbers/social math, tone?

FALLING INTO THE ELEPHANT TRAP IN FRAMING SOCIAL ISSUES:

It's important to recognize standard advocacy practices or habits of speech that fall into the “elephants” category. Here are five examples FrameWorks sees in many advocacy communications. In each case, we explain what's wrong and reframe.

EXAMPLE #1:

“Nuclear power plants do not emit greenhouse gases, which might make people think they would be a good solution to global warming. In truth, they produce hazardous wastes that are every bit as unfriendly to the environment.” OR “Clean coal isn't really clean; in fact, so-called clean coal plants have yet to prove effective.”

What's Wrong With This Framing?: You have first stated the very position you wish to display, then you proceed to attempt to discount it. Why give equal time to your opposition? And why give them first placement? Remember: once the audience has identified the story you are telling them (nuclear plants do not emit greenhouse gases, coal is clean), they stop processing information.

Reframe: Nuclear power is a threat to the environment – it's unhealthy and it's unsafe. Environmental problems like global warming require more responsible solutions that clean up our mess, not make more of it.

Coal is dirty. Coal-burning plants are the single biggest source of industrial air pollution. It's time we moved on to a new generation of energy sources that are clean, safe and renewable.

EXAMPLE #2:

"Usually, people think of violence as fate. It just happens, and you can't do anything about it, so go lock your doors and stay away," Rosenberg said. "Here, they're saying there are patterns in common in various types of violence all around the world, and that we have the goods to prevent it all around the world." Mark Rosenberg, CDC, "WHO Report Details Global Violence," The Washington Post, October 3, 2002, A16

What's Wrong With This Framing?: The speaker reminded people of the frame they believe to be true, reinforcing their dominant frame. While he thought he was using it as a "straw man," only to reveal that "it's not what you think it is," that's not the effect. Once you've reminded people of the story they already believe, no subsequent facts or substitute frames are likely to dislodge it. Being fast and frugal cognators, we appreciate that the speaker has reminded us of what we thought all along so we can process this thought and go back to our laundry. End of conversation.

Reframe: Violence shares common characteristics all over the globe. Just as we have good qualities in common with people everywhere, we also have problems in common. Fortunately, we can also share the knowledge to prevent violence from erupting.

WRITING A PRESS RELEASE

Press Release Template

From: <http://www.press-release-writing.com/press-release-template/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact:

Contact Person

Company Name

Telephone Number

Fax Number

Email Address

Web site address

Headline

City, State, Date — Opening Paragraph (should contain: who, what, when, where, why):

Remainder of body text – Should include any relevant information to your products or services. Include benefits, why your product or service is unique. Also include quotes from staff members, industry experts or satisfied customers.

If there is more than 1 page use:

-more-

(The top of the next page):

Abbreviated headline (page 2)

Remainder of text.

(Restate Contact information after your last paragraph):

For additional information or a sample copy, Contact: (all Contact information)

Summarize product or service specifications one last time

Company History (try to do this in one short paragraph)

###

(indicates Press Release is finished)

Press Release Content Basics

There are seven basic elements that every press release should have in terms of content and how it appears:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: These words should appear in the upper left-hand margin, just under your letterhead. You should capitalize every letter.

Contact Information: Skip a line or two after release statement and list the name, title, telephone and fax numbers of your company spokesperson (the person with the most information). It is important to give your home number since reporters often work on deadlines and may not be available until after hours.

Headline: Skip two lines after your Contact information and use a boldface type.

Dateline: This should be the city your press release is issued from and the date you are mailing your release.

Lead Paragraph: The first paragraph needs to grasp the reader's attention and should contain the relevant information to your message such as the five W's (who, what, when, where, why).

Text: The main body of your press release where your message should fully develop.

Recap: At the lower left hand corner of your last page restate your product's specifications, highlight a product release date.

10 Essential Tips for Writing Press Releases

1. Make sure the information is newsworthy.
2. Tell the audience that the information is intended for them and why they should continue to read it.
3. Start with a brief description of the news, then distinguish who announced it, and not the other way around.
4. Ask yourself, "How are people going to relate to this and will they be able to connect?"
5. Make sure the first 10 words of your release are effective, as they are the most important.
6. Avoid excessive use of adjectives and fancy language.
7. Deal with the facts.
8. Provide as much Contact information as possible: Individual to Contact, address, phone, fax, email, Web site address.
9. Make sure you wait until you have something with enough substance to issue a release.
10. Make it as easy as possible for media representatives to do their jobs.

Press Release Formatting Suggestions

11. Use 8 ½ x 11 paper.
12. Use a minimum of one-inch margins on each side of the page.
13. Use a Bold typeface for the headlines to draw attention.
14. Capitalize the first letter of all words in the headline (with the exception of: “a”, “an”, “the”, or prepositions such as: “of”, “to”, or “from”). The combination of upper and lower case makes it easier to read.
15. Complete the paragraph on one page instead of carrying it over onto the next page.
16. Use only one side of each sheet of paper.
17. Use the word “more” between two dashes and center it at the bottom of the page to let reporters know that another page follows.
18. – more –
19. Use three numbers symbols immediately following the last paragraph to indicate the end of the press release:

###

Sample Press Release

From: <http://www.press-release-writing.com/press-release-template/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Joseph A. Stirt, M.D.

AnesthesiologyExpert.com

2809 Magnolia Drive

Charlottesville, VA 22901

Phone: 804-242-4990

<http://www.anesthesiologyexpert.com>

info@anesthesiologyexpert.com

Anesthesiologist M.D. Offers Expert Defense/Plaintiff Case Analysis of Potential Medical Malpractice

Charlottesville, VA — April 12, 2001 — Before you invest time and money defending or proceeding with an anesthesia-related medical malpractice case, check with expert board-certified anesthesiologist Joseph A. Stirt, M.D. Whether you are a defense or plaintiff attorney, Dr. Stirt can not only tell you if you have a case but also how best to structure it, based on a detailed medical review.

No new comer to cases involving possible anesthesia-related malpractice, Dr. Stirt has 15 years of experience. Presented orally or as a written report, his in-depth analysis can save you hours of preparation and thousands of dollars. He is prepared to step in at the last minute when another expert suddenly withdraws from a case. Availability and rapid response make his service unique.

According to Dr. Stirt, “The question I get most often is, ‘Is it malpractice?’ My job is to sort out the bad outcomes due to occurrences that fall within the standard of care from those that do not. The question of whether a case involves negligence is one that looms over every potential malpractice action. If answered correctly, it can save both defendants and plaintiffs from mental anguish and ill-advised pursuit of a defense or lawsuit.”

Dr. Stirt serves on the faculty of a major U.S. medical school affiliated with a top-rated tertiary care medical center. He sits on state medical boards as an expert reviewer and expert witness in anesthesiology. He has written books, book chapters, and numerous scientific papers, as well

as articles in the medical-legal literature, received honors and awards in medical teaching and scholarship, and has 18 years of academic anesthesia experience ranging from Post Anesthesia Care Unit Director and Outpatient Surgical Unit Director to his current position as Clinical Associate Professor of Anesthesiology.

Dr. Stirt is a diplomate of the American Board of Anesthesiology and the National Board of Medical Examiners. He has been an invited reviewer and lecturer in anesthesiology throughout the U.S. and Europe and has appeared on CNBC.

Accessibility is a unique and important aspect of Dr. Stirt's services. His expertise in anesthesiology is available at any time. He does not work on a contingency fee basis. Your initial telephone consultation is free.

For information: <http://www.anesthesiologyexpert.com> or
Contact: info@anesthesiologyexpert.com
Phone: 804-242-4990

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What is a Press Release?

From: <http://www.prwebdirect.com/pressreleasebenefits.php>

A press release or, news release as it is also called, is a condensed article that is written in a journalistic style. A press release is not a sales document, resume, or an advertisement. The purpose of the news release is to highlight what is interesting and newsworthy about your company or organization. This can include announcing product releases, new services, or drama within your market.

What are the Press Release Costs?

Press releases are relatively inexpensive to prepare and distribute. Compare the price of a full-page ad from a major news publication – generally tens of thousands of dollars. Even local papers typically charge several thousand dollars. For less than a few hundred dollars, you can receive better, more comprehensive coverage than paid advertising. Research shows that most news releases generate a higher return than even high powered ad campaigns.

Free Publicity

When members of the news media feature your story pulled from your press release, free publicity is being generated. Frequently, your story can show up not only in one major newspaper, but in three, as well as in news talk shows carried on major networks such as NBC or CBS. If you are looking to publicize in local markets only, releases can be directed to those local publications and hit editor's news feeds who write for your specific industry. If you are looking for global coverage, news releases are the best marketing tools. In a sense, a press release is a gift that just keeps giving.

News releases not only reach journalists but they also capture potential customers and/or investors which means that your products and/or services can be both funded and be made more profitable simply based on the media attention your release receives. Whatever your target audience may be, news releases offer you a way to become known to the public without a significant investment. Even large corporations who spend millions of dollars on ad campaigns continue to use news releases to maintain public interest which results in higher revenue.

Added Benefits for Sending a Press Release

Another advantage to sending out news releases is that there is always demand. All news organizations, to include magazine editors, broadcast, and industry specific editors use press releases to develop the bulk of their published news stories. From a consumer stand point, editors who report on your news release are considered disinterested parties, meaning that your announcement was chosen because of public demand for relevant and useful information. Often, paid advertising is suspect in the customer's eye because companies are more interested in their products selling than what is in the best interest of their customers.

To sum up, the benefits to sending out news releases include:

- low cost

- increased visibility for your company
- high demand for press releases
- added credibility for your organization
- new customers
- new investors
- free publicity

This free publicity generated from your news release is all the better because the media has given its stamp of approval which adds credibility and value to your company or organization.

Tips, Guidelines and Templates for Writing an Effective Press Release

From: <http://www.prwebdirect.com/pressreleasetips.php>

- [Press Release Content Tips](#)
- [Tips for Press Release Formatting](#)
- [Press Release Template](#)
- [Common Press Release Errors](#)

The following information will assist you when writing a news release for distribution through the PRWeb press release network. A well crafted press release captures the attention of journalists and is optimized for distribution over the Internet, through e-mail and over PRWeb's specialized network feeds.

Note: Some of the information contained in this tip sheet are specific to the PRWeb press release network.

Pay Attention to the Content of Your Press Release

When we talk about content, we refer to the news story you are telling. Keep the following points in mind when writing your press release.

Is your news "newsworthy?" The purpose of a press release is to inform the world of your news item. Do not use your press release to try and make a sale. A good press release answers all of the "W" questions (who, what, where, when and why), providing the media with useful information about your organization, product, service or event. If your press release reads like an advertisement, rewrite it.

Start strong. Your headline and first paragraph should tell the story. The rest of your press release should provide the detail. You have a matter of seconds to grab your readers' attention. Do not blow it with a weak opening.

Write for the Media. On occasion, media outlets, especially online media, will pick up your press release and run it in their publications with little or no modification. More commonly, journalists will use your press release as a springboard for a larger feature story. In either case, try to develop a story as you would like to have it told. Even if your news is not reprinted verbatim, it may provide an acceptable amount of exposure.

Not everything is news. Your excitement about something does not necessarily mean that you have a newsworthy story. Think about your audience. Will someone else find your story interesting? Let's assume that you have just spent a lot of effort to launch a new online store. Announcing your company's opening is always an exciting time for any business, but the last thing the media wants to write about is another online store. This is old news and uninteresting. Instead, focus on the features of your online shopping experience, unique products and services. Answer the question, "Why should anyone care?" and make sure your announcement has some news values such as timeliness, uniqueness or something truly unusual. Avoid clichés such as "customers save money" or "great customer service." Focus on the aspects of your news item that truly set you apart from everyone else.

Does your press release illustrate? Use real life examples about how your company or organization solved a problem. Identify the problem and identify why your solution is the right solution. Give examples of how your service or product fulfills needs or satisfies desires. What benefits can be expected? Use real life examples to powerfully communicate the benefits of using your product or service.

If you are reporting on a corporate milestone, make sure that you attribute your success or failures to one or more events. If your company has experienced significant growth, tell the world what you did right. Show the cause and effect.

Stick to the facts. Tell the truth. Avoid fluff, embellishments and exaggerations. If you feel that your press release contains embellishments, perhaps it would be a good idea to set your press release aside until you have more exciting news to share. Journalists are naturally skeptical. If your story sounds too good to be true, you are probably hurting your own credibility. Even if it is true, you may want to tone it down a bit.

Pick an angle. Try to make your press release timely. Tie your news to current events or social issues if possible. Make sure that your story has a good news hook.

Use active, not passive, voice. Verbs in the active voice bring your press release to life. Rather than writing "entered into a partnership" use "partnered" instead. Do not be afraid to use strong verbs as well. For example, "The committee exhibited severe hostility over the incident." reads better if changed to "The committee was enraged over the incident." Writing in this manner, helps guarantee that your press release will be read.

Economics of words. Use only enough words to tell your story. Avoid using unnecessary adjectives, flowery language, or redundant expressions such as "added bonus" or "first time ever". If you can tell your story with fewer words, do it. Wordiness distracts from your story. Keep it concise. Make each word count.

Beware of jargon. While a limited amount of jargon will be required if your goal is to optimize your news release for online search engines, the best way to communicate your news is to speak plainly, using ordinary language. Jargon is language specific to certain professions or groups and is not appropriate for general readership. Avoid such terms as "capacity planning techniques" "extrapolate" and "prioritized evaluative procedures."

Avoid the hype. The exclamation point (!) is your enemy. There is no better way to destroy your credibility than to include a bunch of hype. If you must use an exclamation point, use one. Never do this!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Get Permission. Companies are very protective about their reputation. Be sure that you have written permission before including information or quotes from employees or affiliates of other companies or organizations. Any dispute resolution will favor the other company, meaning that your press release may get pulled.

About your company. Your press release should end with a short paragraph (company boilerplate) that describes your company, products, service and a short company history. If you are filing a joint press release, include a boilerplate for both companies.

Formatting Your Press Release

How you present your news is just as important as its content. Some of these suggestions are specific to PRWeb's distribution service.

Mixed case. NEVER SUBMIT A PRESS RELEASE IN ALL UPPER CASE LETTERS. This is very bad form. Even if your release makes it past PRWeb's editors (highly unlikely), it will definitely be ignored by journalists. Use mixed case.

Correct grammar usage. Always follow rules of grammar and style. Errors in grammar and style affect your credibility. Excessive errors will cause your press release to be rejected by PRWeb's editors.

Word processor. Write your press release on a word processor instead of composing online. Writing online will not achieve best results. Take time to do it right. Write, print, proof read. Rewrite, _.

No HTML. Never embed HTML or other markup languages in your press release. Your press release will be distributed over a wide array of networks. Including such formatting will negatively impact the readability of your press release.

More than one paragraph. It is nearly impossible to tell your story in a few sentences. If you do not have more than a few sentences, chances are you do not have a newsworthy item

Summary paragraph. PRWeb asks you to include a one-paragraph summary. Some distribution points only receive your headline, summary and a link to your press release. If you fail to include a summary paragraph, you may reduce the effectiveness of your press release.

Do not include your e-mail address in the body of your release. We have a special place during the submission process for you to include your e-mail address. If you include your e-mail address in the body of your press release, you run the risk of receiving spam. This is because your e-mail address will be available to the public. Spiders routinely scour the Internet harvesting e-mail addresses for spammers. Provide your e-mail address only

in the space(s) provided during the submission process.

Ticker Symbols. Never include ticker symbols of other companies without their express written permission.

Follow a Standard Press Release Format

Make sure your press release looks like a press release. The following can be used as a template for your press release.

Headline Announces News in Title Case, Ideally Under 80 Characters

The summary paragraph is a little longer synopsis of the news, elaborating on the news in the headline in one to four sentences. The summary uses sentence case, with standard capitalization and punctuation.

City, State (PRWEB) Month 1, 2006 -- The lead sentence contains the most important information in 25 words or less. Grab your reader's attention here by simply stating the news you have to announce. Do not assume that your reader has read your headline or summary paragraph; the lead should stand on its own.

A news release, like a news story, keeps sentences and paragraphs short, about three or four lines per paragraph. The first couple of paragraphs should answer the who, what, when, where, why and how questions. The news media may take information from a news release to craft a news or feature article or may use information in the release word-for-word, but a news release is not, itself, an article or a reprint.

The standard press release is 300 to 800 words and written in a word processing program that checks spelling and grammar before submission to PRWeb. This template is 519 words.

The ideal headline is 80 characters long. PRWeb will accept headlines with a maximum of 170 characters. PRWeb recommends writing your headline and summary last, to be sure you include the most important news elements in the body of the release. Use title case in the headline only, capitalizing every word except for prepositions and articles of three characters or less.

The rest of the news release expounds on the information provided in the lead paragraph. It includes quotes from key staff, customers or subject matter experts. It contains more details about the news you have to tell, which can be about something unique or controversial or about a prominent person, place or thing.

Typical topics for a news release include announcements of new products or of a strategic partnership, the receipt of an award, the publishing of a book, the release of new software or the launch of a new Web site. The tone is neutral and objective, not full of hype or text that is typically found in an advertisement. Avoid directly addressing

the consumer or your target audience. The use of "I," "we" and "you" outside of a direct quotation is a flag that your copy is an advertisement rather than a news release.

Do not include an e-mail address in the body of the release. If you do, it will be protected from spambots with a notice to that effect, which will overwrite your e-mail address.

"The final paragraph of a traditional news release contains the least newsworthy material," said Mario Bonilla, member services director for PRWeb. "But for an online release, it's typical to restate and summarize the key points with a paragraph like the next one."

For additional information on the news that is the subject of this release (or for a sample, copy or demo), contact Mary Smith or visit www.prweb.com. You can also include details on product availability, trademark acknowledgment, etc. here.

About XYZ Company:

Include a short corporate background, or "boilerplate," about the company or the person who is newsworthy before you list the contact person's name and phone number.

Contact:

Mary Smith, director of public relations
XYZ Company
555-555-5555
<http://www.prweb.com>

###

Future of Press Releases

The Mainstay of Public Relations Goes Digital

© [Patricia Faulhaber](#)

■ [Jan 25, 2009](#)

Changes are shaping a new mainstay for public relations: the digital press release.

The mainstay of any public relations office has long been the press release. Not only have press releases remained the number one tool for communicating company news to the media, the press release itself has remained remarkably unchanged over the years.

That is until recently. Today with all things going online, all things press release related must go digital. Plus, press releases need to be written in SEO style to be effective.

Search Engine Optimized (SEO) Press Releases

Thom Brodeur, senior vice president global strategy and development for Marketwire, said, “It has been four years since we launched SEO for the press release, and still, less than 30 percent of our clients have their releases keyword optimized. SEO continues to grow in importance and the market is adapting more each year.”

Reasons for the slow migration to SEO press releases may be because of the lack of standards for writing or the lack of experience by those working in public relations.

The industry, according to Brodeur, is working on social media and online press room standards that will include standards for SEO.

Journalists Conduct Most of Their Research Online

The up and coming millennial journalists are looking online for news and information to research their news stories. Mediapost.com posted research in November 2008 that shows:

- 87% of 18-29 year olds believe bloggers have become opinion shapers
- 87% of 18-29 year olds confirm that new media and communications enhances the relationships with audiences
- 68% use blogs to keep on issues or topics of interest
- 86% use company web sites
- 71% use Wikipedia
- 46% use blogs to conduct research.

If the reporters are looking online for news and features, public relations practitioners need to make sure that number one, their company news is online and second that the release is SEOed so that others can find it.

First Step to SEO Press Releases

The integration of print and digital communications tools will go much faster and easier as more models of success are available. Many of the commercial newswires offer SEO tools or templates for SEO style press releases.

Brodeur said, “Marketwire does have an SEO add-on that our clients can select when uploading a press release. Today our service includes backwards links and meta tagging of keywords and phrases throughout the release. In the future, our SEO will provide analysis of keyword appropriateness and density.”

Test the SEO Press Release Waters

The best models are those that are working. A good way to see results first-hand is to use the search engines and type in keywords or phrases and review the results for press releases. Did the search return any press releases? If so, where did the press releases fall on the list, at the top, bottom or somewhere in between?

For those press releases coming out on top of the list, review the release for how the writer used the keywords and phrases throughout the release.

The Digital News World Awaits

Press releases will continue to rule the public relations roost – just in a different form. New changes for the better are taking place with news releases. The digital news release will bring a wealth of new prospects and website visitors.

Questions about Publicity and Public Relations

What is Publicity?

At its core, publicity is the simple act of making a suggestion to a journalist that leads to the inclusion of a company or product in a story. Newspapers, magazines, TV programs and radio shows have large amounts of space to fill and depend upon publicists to help provide story ideas, interview subjects, background information and other material.

For the most part, the act of making a suggestion to a journalist, when successful, will lead to one of two types of coverage:

- A story created from scratch built around the story "angle" you suggest (e.g. a feature story on your company; a story about a trend that you present to a journalist; an interview segment, etc.)
- The inclusion of your product, company or service in an already existing story (e.g. the reporter is already working on a story about your field and your contact with her results in your product being included in the piece).

What is Public Relations?

Public Relations is a broader field that encompasses publicity, but also includes such things as investor relations, crisis communications, special events and sponsorships, and other activities designed to mold opinion.

What's a Press Release?

The most important tool for making a suggestion to a journalist is the press release. Simply put, a press release is a pseudo-news story that presents the most newsworthy aspect of your product, company or service in a format and language familiar to the journalist. A good press release places the newsworthy angle at the very top (much as the lead paragraph of a well-written news story does), and is free of hyperbole and overt promotion. Paragraphs subsequent to the lead may include background information, spokesperson quotations and other information that can help put the newsworthiness of the story in perspective.

For more details about writing the perfect press release [click here](#).

What's a Pitch Letter?

While the press release is written in third person, the pitch letter allows for direct communication between the publicist and the journalist. It's an opportunity to pique interest, form a relationship and persuade. Bad pitch letters begin with boring formalities or promotional hype. Good pitch letters begin with a striking opening that immediately alerts the journalist to an interesting story possibility (e.g. if you're promoting sunscreen: "In the time it takes to read this letter, seven new cases of melanoma will be diagnosed." Or, if you're an accountant: "Americans who were unaware of a new tax break needlessly paid more than \$5

billion in extra taxes last year -- and time is running out for them to get that money back."

The pitch letter has one purpose: to persuade the journalist to read the attached press release. Personalize it, keep it short, sign it and clip it to the front of your press release.

For more details about writing the perfect pitch letter [click here](#).

How Do I Find Something "Newsworthy" About My Business?

To an editor, an item is newsworthy if he feels his readers, listeners or viewers will find it interesting and/or useful. What's newsworthy to the editor of *Field & Stream* is, of course, quite different than what's newsworthy to the editor of *Cosmopolitan*. However, all newsworthy items do have some things in common.

To uncover the newsworthiness in your business, think about your target customer. Put yourself in his or her shoes. What would make you excited? intrigued? provoked? Now, think about how your business provides some type of service, product or information that feeds into these reactions.

Remember our pitch letter opening for the accountant? You might think that being one of a hundred accountants in town might make it tough to be newsworthy, but "Americans who were unaware of a new tax break needlessly paid more than \$5 billion in extra taxes last year -- and time is running out for them to get that money back." should make a few business reporters stand up and take notice. In this case, the accountant's target customers are individuals and business who file taxes. What gets them excited and intrigued? The notion that they may have some money due back to them. What will provoke them? The realization that there's a deadline to claim that money.

Notice that the pitch doesn't say "Local accountant Jane Brown specializes in tax overpayments" or "Jane Brown, a graduate of the University of Michigan, has opened an accounting practice specializing in tax overpayments." Those are angles of interest chiefly to Jane Brown. However, "Americans needlessly pay more than \$5 billion in extra taxes" is an angle of interest to just about everyone.

For more about developing newsworthy story angles, [click here](#).

I'm Intimidated By the Prospect of Calling a Reporter. They Seem Pretty Gruff.

Even trained professionals can have a difficult time with this one. Reporters can be harried and rushed, and they spend a lot of time deflecting phone calls from people wanting to pitch them all sorts of ridiculous stories. However, it's important to remember that they need you as much as you need them. If you are presenting a useful story idea professionally and courteously, you'll do just fine.